No. 841
Friday
11 March '92

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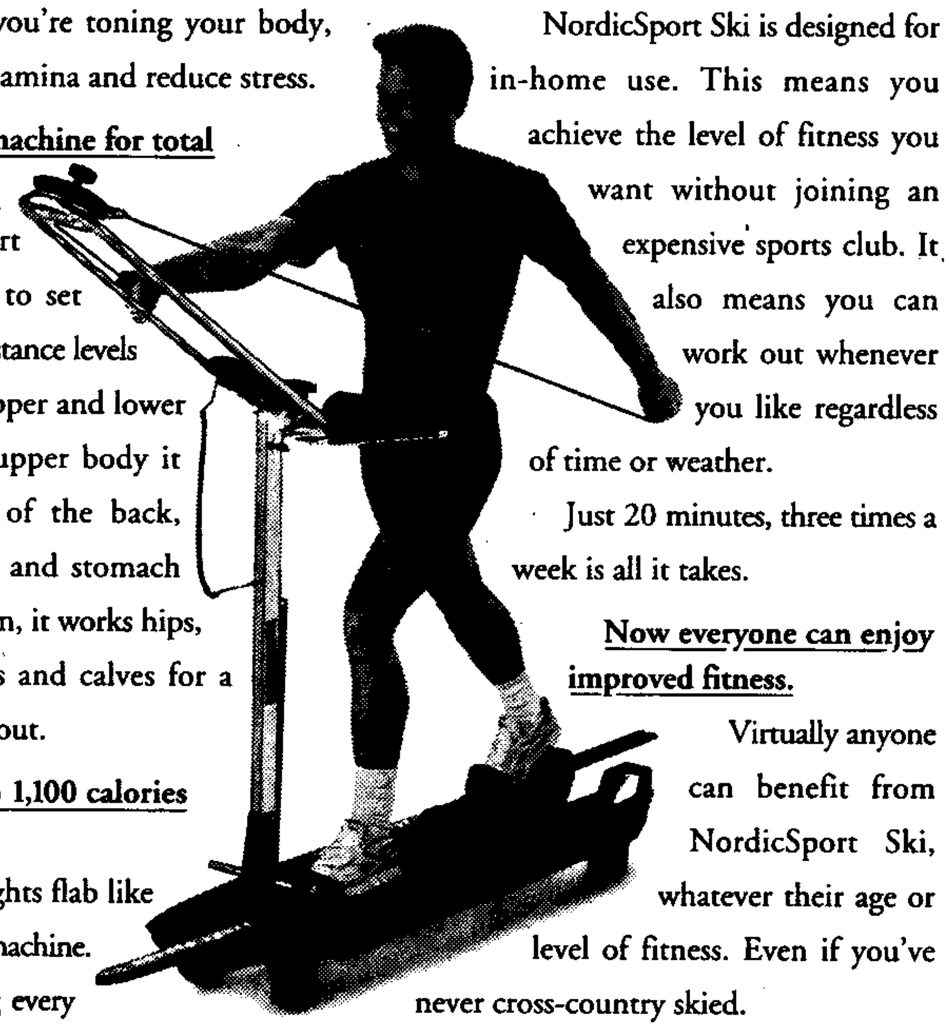

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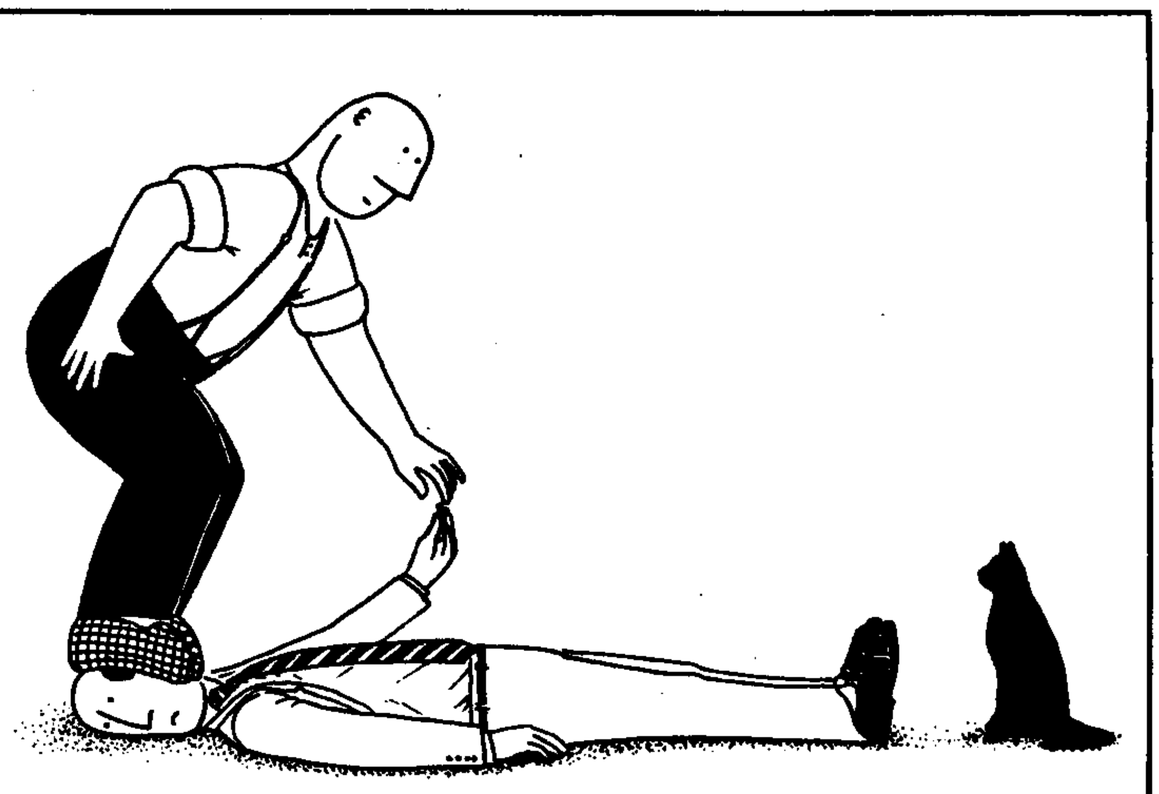

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Gnome

Forget any rubbish you've got on Bosnia or Malaysia, I want this as the Lead. Gnome

EYE MEN WIN AWARDS

Yet again Eye journalists starred in the Gnome UK Press Awards, the most prestigious press award ceremony this week, apart from the other three.

At a glittering reception at the Heathrow Trust-House Ramada Hotel, the awards were presented by former Cabinet minister Tim Yeo.

Yeo was warmly applauded when he said that he believed in a free press — and also a free dinner, even when it meant coming out to Heathrow to make an idiot of himself in front of a bunch of seedy hacks.

Winners included:

Reporter of the Year: Lunchtime O'Booze, for his coverage of Sarajevo from beneath the table in the pub.

Female Journalist of the Year: Ms Glenda Slagg.

Sports Journalist of the Year: E.I. Addio, for coverage of the Women's 2-Man Bob-Luge event at the Winter Olympics.

Worst Columnist of the Year: Peter McLie.

Private Eye was also runner-up in the Buggins Turn Award, and was highly commended in the Best Satirical Fortnightly Magazine Costing 90p category. Uncle Tom Cobbleigh and all picked up various other awards.

It all goes to prove that Britain's top journalists are always to be found in hotel bars in London *(shurely 'the Eye'? E. Strobes)*.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
"Proprietor of the Year 1994"
c/o The Gnome Awards
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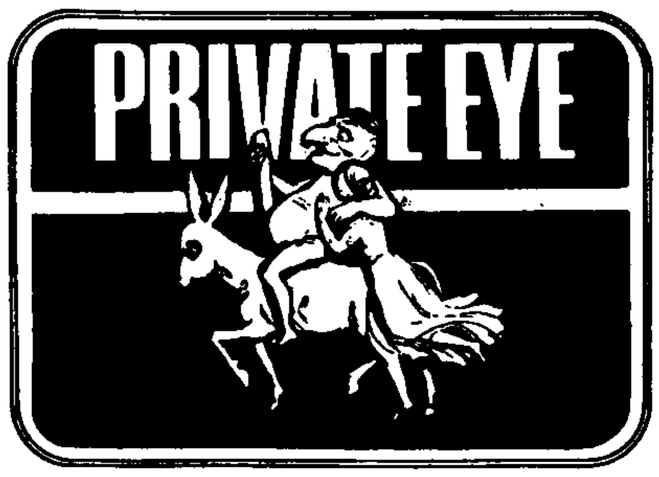


COLOUR SECTION

THE ROW over the Malaysia aid-for-arms deal has already come close to solving the greatest mystery of the last 10 years: how an unqualified third-rate rally driver called Mark Thatcher turned himself into a multi-millionaire.

It was not an investigative journalist but a former leader of the Liberal party, Sir David Steel, who first blurted out that a key figure in the multi-billion British arms deals with Malaysia in the last five years was another racing driver with a not very distinguished business record: Steve Tipping, close friend to Mark and best man at his wedding.

Thatcher and Tipping set up Monteagle Marketing in the year that Mark's mother became prime minister. The firm's most historic success was clinched by the young Mark, then a consultant to a construction company called Cementation, a subsidiary of Trafalgar House, in a trip to Oman in 1981 which coincided with his mother's "batting for Britain" with the sultan.

Prominent in Thatcher's batting order were two Tims: Brigadier Tim Landon, who led the SAS-backed coup which placed the Sultan in power in 1970; and her private secretary, an ambitious civil servant called Tim Lankester. The sultan dished out the building contracts: Trafalgar House got the best of them, and Cementation paid Monteagle Marketing (Thatcher and Tipping) £50,000.

The affair hit the headlines. In 1984 Mark Thatcher was exiled to Dallas, where he got a job with Lotus cars, and Monteagle went into liquidation. Suddenly, at the ebb of Mark's fortunes, everything seemed to go right for him. He kept contact with Tipping, who started a new career doing business with some of the most powerful businessmen in the country — brought together for important meetings by Mark's patron, Alan Curtis, chairman of Lotus.

By the mid-1980s Curtis had switched his energies from cars to arms. In September 1986, in a special tent erected at the Farnborough Air Show for the Society of British Aircraft Constructors, Curtis entertained his new circle: Richard Unwin of Unwin International, an arms company; Stephanus Adolphus Kock, a consultant to the Midland Bank on arms sales — and Steve Tipping.

The group met regularly and liaised with the ministry of defence (whose head of defence sales was Colin Chandler); and with Britain's biggest arms manufacturer, British Aerospace, whose most thrusting executive was Dick Evans, now chief executive. Curtis was the key figure in the group. In 1992, Gerald James, former chairman of Astra, which bought Unwin's arms company, was asked at a Commons select committee: "You are saying it appeared to you that Mr Curtis could open doors at the top of government and knew other very important people who could have financed your sales." James answered: "Absolutely."

Curtis, Unwin, Kock, Tipping, Chandler and Evans all played prominent roles in the Malaysian arms deals. BAe (Evans) sold Hawk aircraft. Chandler represented the British government defence sales department. Unwin was the agent. Tipping spent more than 150 nights in luxury Malaysian hotels negotiating deals for the spare parts for the Hawks. Kock not only helped organise the arms deals, but also on his own admission (*Channel Four News*, 28 January) was involved in the Pergau dam project.

(Exactly what an arms consultant had to do with a hydro-electric project has never been made clear, but Kock's involvement casts some doubt on the government's pretence that the "entanglement" of aid and arms was just a documentary blunder.)

Ironically, the man most responsible for exposing government lies and cover-ups over the link between the dam and the arms was Sir Tim Lankester, former head of the Overseas Development Administration, who had such direct experience of Thatcher's batting for Britain in Oman in 1981.

> There are well-substantiated but unprintable rumours that there are some undeclared gay Labour MPs — however their leader, John Smith, has not set the noose of 'Back to Basics' around their necks.
>
> *Observer*

Mark Thatcher himself never makes himself available for questioning by the British press. His spokesperson is Sir Tim Bell — who also speaks for the prime minister of Malaysia. Members of the Thatcher family are surprisingly coy about answering questions about Malaysia.

At a conference on 3 March, entitled World Trade After Gatt, Lady Thatcher, Mark's mother, refused to answer questions after a 25-minute speech. The reasons for her refusal were spelled out by her former parliamentary private secretary, Gerald Howarth. He explained that all the questions were about Malaysia, and the boss didn't want to answer questions about one country.

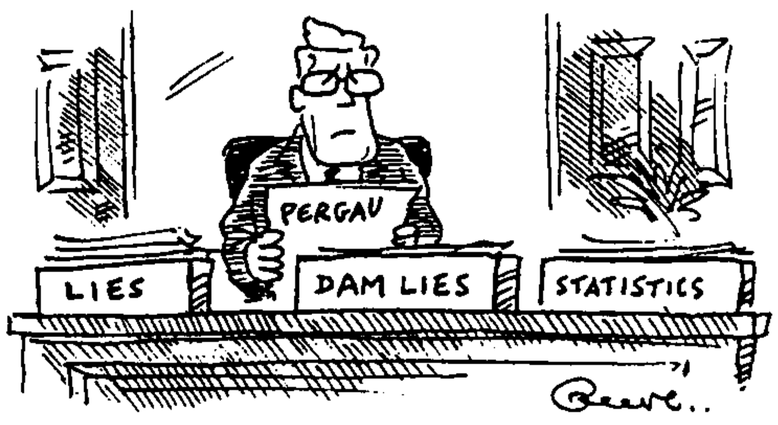
Howarth has recently formed a new PR company with the chairman of the conference, Thatcher loyalist Lord Parkinson. Howarth was also a former paid consultant to one of Richard Unwin's companies, and to the Astra arms company when it took over Unwin. He lost his Midlands seat at the last general election, but is now the selected candidate for the safe seat at Aldershot, where one of his most powerful and wealthy constituents will be Steven Tipping.

● See *Rocket Man*, Letters, p 13.

HEZZA'S new image as "Mr Clean" has surprised the arms world.

They recall the signing of the Al Yamamah arms deal between the British and Saudi Arabian governments in 1985. The commissions paid to Saudi middlemen were so huge that the national audit office report on them had to be suppressed by the Commons public accounts committee.

The deal was signed in a glare of publicity by Margaret Thatcher. But credit should not be withheld from her (then) loyal defence secretary, one Michael Heseltine.



Street of Shame

THIS eye-catching picture, taken in the former Soviet republic of Georgia by Malcolm Linton, occupied two pages of the *Independent* magazine's "Photos of the Year" feature on 1 January this year.

"A Georgian loyalist, his gun and shooting finger bandaged alike, exults at the death of an Abkhazian sniper," the caption revealed.

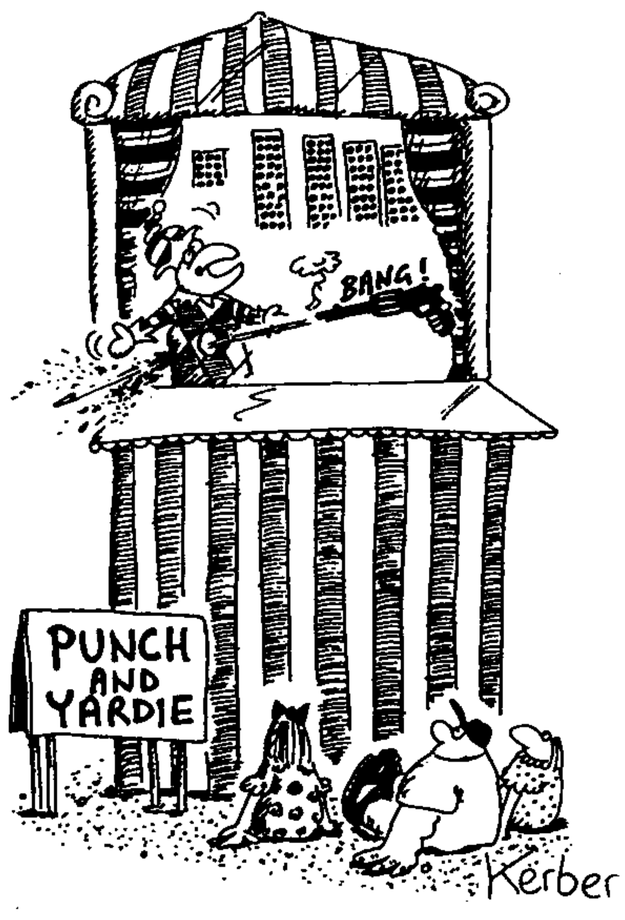
How surprising, then, to find the selfsame picture used to illustrate a feature on British mercenaries in Bosnia that appeared in the *Guardian*'s Weekend section last month. The caption was more surprising still: "The pleasure shows on the face of a mercenary as he scores a direct hit with an automatic weapon..." the photo was taken, according to the *Guardian*, "by one of his comrades in arms".

ROB KELLAWAY of the *Sun* is inexplicably peeved at a piece in the last *Eye* which mentioned that he had acquired a copy of *London Student* newspaper while covering the story of Emily Barr, the comely undergraduate whose quasi-affair with MP Hartley Booth caused such tabloid excitement last month.

In a letter to Lord Gnome, Kellaway insists that he "did not obtain a copy of the paper".

It is hard to know why this utterly unimportant question should trouble the bumptious *Sun* hack. Still, since he seems to think it worth making a fuss about, we would draw Kellaway's attention to an article in the *Sun* of 14 February under his byline.

"Ironically," Kellaway reported, "Emily's latest story for her student newspaper mentions the heartache caused by secret affairs. She interviews ex-con Peter Wayne, who tells her: 'Politicians are all crooks.' She adds: 'He should know.' "



TEARS were shed as Rory Knight-Bruce returned briefly to the *Evening Standard* to retire from Londoner's Diary.

Executive features editor Sarah Sands hastily organised a farewell card and arm-twisted a few signatures (including those who had never met Knight-Bruce). And editor Stewart Steven gave a short speech paying tribute to someone called Rory Bruce-Knight.

However, one who will treasure his memory is Kate Douglas, who went to do a shift on the diary last summer. Knight-Bruce verbally humiliated her to such an extent that she burst into tears and left at lunchtime. When he asked about her later in the day a colleague said she had gone home.

"Silly girl!" exclaimed Bruce-Knight. "We don't want her sort on the diary."

Minutes later, when told by a colleague that her father is the Marquis of Queensberry, Bruce-Knight was grovelling to her on the phone. Thereafter he took it upon himself to nurture the aristocratic fledgeling and groom her for a career in journalism. This process required her to be given an extraordinary number of freelance shifts on the diary, as well as to be vigorously lunched by Bruce-Knight.

This training has paid off for both. Douglas is now ensconced at Dai Llewellyn's exciting *Voila* magazine, where she has written her first really difficult celebrity profile — of her father — while a second piece — a profile of Bruce-Knight — is on the cards.

PRESUMABLY in deference to the born-again Christianity of its owner, Rupert Murdoch, the *Sunday Times* has been taking a high moral line in recent weeks.

First it ran a weird profile of Roy Jenkins, blaming him for undermining British society by legalising homosexuality, making divorce easier, etc, even though the paper is liberally staffed with gays and divorcees.

Now the same high-minded tone has spread to the leader column, with an editorial arguing "the essential thrust of back to basics was right. There is a need to revive the basic values of the kind of society older generations grew up in, centred on nuclear, two-parent families..."

This sounds remarkably like the sort of leaders that used to appear in the *Sunday Telegraph* — particularly the ones denouncing *Sunday Times* editor Andrew Neill for being an irresponsible, fun-loving bachelor who consorted with a call girl like Pamela Bordes.

PETER McKAY has again been overcome by indignation at the freeloading of fellow hacks.

In his Mr Pepys column in the *Evening Standard*, he has often attacked the London Diarists' Luncheon Club, which meets four times a year at selected venues and whose members are fed in return for copious puffs in their columns.

The reason for McHackey's disapproval, according to club members, is that he has never been invited.

Now McHackey has attacked fellow columnists Peter Tory and Christopher Wilson for taking part in a photo-shoot for *OK* magazine, though the caption to his photo did not say that the other hack in the picture was McHackey's sidekick on Mr Pepys, Rohan Daft.

FACT: After railing against freeloading, McHackey needed a break and so took a *Standard* freebie to Nashville.

WITLESS Trend-Spotting by Newspapers Desperate to Fill Space: the first in an occasional series.

"It looks as though the dining room is on the way out... The kitchen, now that servants are a thing of the past, is the prime candidate for the dining area... The notion of giving up a whole room to the business of eating is becoming old-fashioned." — *Daily Telegraph*, Saturday 19 February.

"Not long ago, many people who had the choice abandoned the dining-room as an anachronism in modern living. Now they have brought it back... although eating in the kitchen is undoubtedly here to stay, kitchen dining is *out*... The dining room has re-emerged, complete with all the trappings." — *The Times*, Saturday 19 February 1994.

JUST FANCY THAT

The confusion over the technical penalty imposed on Dean for lifting his partner over his head is typical. Some claimed, wrongly, yesterday it had cost them a gold medal.

Michael Calvin, Daily Telegraph, 23.2.94 p.42

THE spectacular somersault lift performed by Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean ultimately cost them the Olympic ice dance gold medal, it was confirmed yesterday.

Sandra Stevenson, Daily Telegraph, 23.2.94 p.42

THE Scottish *Daily Record* is the only Mirror Group title with a rising circulation. So in a desperate attempt to reduce it to the same pitiful condition as his rags south of the border, David "Rommel" Montgomery has ordered that 44 of its 185 hacks will be made redundant.

This is in spite of the fact that MGN's new Scottish managing director, Murdoch MacLennan, told the *Record*'s hacks last year that what was happening to Mirror staff would *not* happen in Scotland. "You are the people we need," he assured them. One can only assume he was lying — or, more likely, that he was overruled by his increasingly demented boss in London.

Endell Laird, the *Record*'s editor-in-chief, has said that those forced to walk the plank should think themselves lucky, bearing in mind the fate of many Maxwell pensioners. Fair enough: but this is the same Endell Laird who wrote a heart-rending, tear-stained valediction of Cap'n Bob in the *Record* when the fat crook fell overboard.

Laird also claims the severance terms are "very good". In fact, even hacks who have spent a lifetime at the paper have been warned that their redundo will be "capped" at a maximum of £45,000. Compare this with the loot that Laird and MacLennan could expect to pocket if they were ever sacked. Laird would make a clear profit of around £450,000 on his share options in MGN, and his contract also entitles him to two years' salary — £200,000. Likewise MacLennan — just in the door — would make a shares profit of £1.3 million, as well as collecting three year's salary: about £480,000.

Nor has morale been improved by Laird's brusque treatment of the new victims. One of them, award-winning chief reporter Gordon Airs, had to wait for three days before being told that his application for voluntary redundancy had been approved by Laird. But then Airs, who had served for 33 years and once went to prison for refusing to name a source, was suddenly told that the editor wanted him to clear his desk and leave the building straight away. As Airs walked towards the door, the assembled hacks clapped and cheered him out in an emotional farewell. Laird, red-faced and furious, ordered executives there must be no similar demonstrations in future.

A week later, after going to the office to pick up his redundancy cheque, Airs joined a news-desk executive and other friends for a meal at a nearby restaurant. Two days later the executive was phoned at home by the news editor, who warned him that his fraternising with the former chief reporter had been "noted". Meanwhile, yet another senior executive was quizzed by the uncouth Laird as to whether he had taken part in the Airs demo. He replied that he had been in his office at the time, but added that if he had been present he would have joined in. An angry editor made it clear this would be "noted" as well.

Laird's temper worsened further two weeks ago when he learned that a four-strong team from the *Record* had been "highly commended" in the British press awards for their exposé of the Hoover flights fiasco.

Two of the four — including Airs — have already left the paper, and Laird did not bother to pass on their invitations to the prize-giving in London. He told the remaining two hacks that they could not have a day off to collect the award. As the curse of Rommel takes effect at Anderston Quay, it seems unlikely the paper will be winning any more awards in the near future.

There isn't a COVER-UP – unless you subscribe. See back page for amazing offer.

HALLO!

The new heartwarming column

HALLO! POOR Betty Maxwell, still grieving for the loss of her charming husband, tells us that she has a new sorrow.

Having at last finished writing an account of her years with "Captain Bob", which includes some fascinating revelations about his sexual appetite, she delivered it to Messrs Macmillan, who had already paid her a handsome advance for it.

Alas, the man who commissioned the book for Macmillan, Roland Philipps, left the company recently; and his successors did not share his enthusiasm for Betty's book, to be titled *A Life of My Own*. **They turned it down.**

Betty then took it to Philipps at the publishing house he now runs, Hodder Headline; but he too now seemed to have gone off the idea.

Fortunately, Betty is likely to be bailed out by none other than Rupert Murdoch, who used to be her husband's greatest rival. In New York, Mr Murdoch's HarperCollins has already bought the American rights, and the firm's London branch will probably publish it over here. There is even talk that it may be serialised in Mr Murdoch's *Sunday Times*, **which would earn Betty even more money.**

Some miserable malcontent is bound to point out that, under the rules of the Press Complaints Commission, the families of criminals are not supposed to profit from selling their stories. But, as Betty rightly observes, her late husband was never convicted of any crime — and therefore was not a criminal!

HALLO! *THOSE horrid Tory whips, notorious for their cynicism and cruelty, have turned on Hartley Booth, the MP who resigned his PPS's job after a kiss, a cuddle and a spot of moist (Shurely "modest"? The Marquesa) foreplay with his researcher. The whips are putting it about — unlike Hartley — that he was unequal to the task, referring to him as "the maker of Hartley's seedless jam".*

HALLO! THESE ARE trying times for David Burnside, the rugged high-flyer who used to be Lord King's right-hand man at British Airways.

Having already endured a lot of disagreeable publicity because of the airline's perfectly sensible "dirty tricks" campaign against Richard Branson, he has now been named — along with his dear friend Lord King — as one of the defendants in a case brought by Harry Goodman, the former boss of Air Europe.

How pleasing, then, to learn that he is not letting these little problems interfere with his enjoyment of life. At Lancaster magistrates court last week he pleaded guilty to driving while exceedingly drunk, during a shooting party at the house of that amusing socialist tycoon Owen Oyston.

The court heard that Burnside had been found on a country road at 7 am, fast asleep in his car with the engine still running and the headlights on. "It took several minutes to wake Burnside," PC Nigel Ralphson testified. "He kept putting his finger to his lips and going 'shhh'. When he finally did awake, his behaviour was such that it led me to believe that he was very drunk."

Rather unsportingly, the magistrates fined Burnside £1,000 and disqualified him from driving for three years.

HALLO! *TO GREENS, the St James's seafood restaurant, for a dinner to celebrate the 60th birthday of Keith Waterhouse, basque-loving, champagne-swilling scribe.*

The distinguished all-mate, all-hack company included Associated Newspapers supremo Sir David English and veteran Daily Mirror editor Hugh Cudlipp. But the occasion was overshadowed by a jolly exchange between diminutive Daily Mail theatre critic Jack Tinker and bloated Daily Express columnist Paul Callan.

A mischief-maker whispered into Tinker's ear that Callan was still boasting that Tinker had seduced him on a train to Brighton some 20 years ago. Tinker blew his stack and confronted Callan. "How dare you?" exclaimed Tinker. "For the past 20 years you've been claiming that I seduced you, when it was you who practically raped me."

While Sir David English delighted at this exchange, the deeply homophobic Daily Mail editor Paul Dacre sickened visibly at the mental picture of this Little and Large coupling. On leaving the restaurant in the small hours, Peter Tory described the atmosphere of the evening as one of "unalloyed evil". Such fun!

HALLO! WE ARE invited to the Garrick Club by the much-maligned libel solicitor Peter Carter-Fuck to celebrate his 80th birthday, along with the distinguished Oxfordshire gardener Michael Heseltine and various litigious celebrities.

Anyone who thinks Fuck, as his friends call him, is about to retire can rest assured he has lost none of his professional skills. He even has time, it seems, to read a vulgar column in *Time Out* **by a nonentity called Jon Ronson.**

He recently telephoned one of Ronson's victims, Bernard Docherty, the charming and talented popular music PR man who had been responsible for dispensing after-show invitations to journalists at the Brit awards. Commiserating with Docherty over Ronson's description of him as "an appalling, balding, power-crazed asshole" and the connected observation that "it's nice to know that there are still cunts in the industry, and not just vegans", Peter suggested Docherty might like to consider suing *Time Out*.

"What, you mean for an apology?" Docherty asked. "No," said Fuck. "An apology would be even more humiliating. You should sue for compensation."

HALLO! ANOTHER undeserving target of media abuse whom Peter has chosen to represent is TV presenter Mandy Smith-Van den Hauwe. Mandy was described by *Daily Express* columnist Jill Parkin as someone who had "bonked her way into the headlines".

Mandy's under-age affair with Rolling Stone Bill Wyman is an episode she clearly wishes us to forget, as she explained fully in her recent book, *My Life with Bill Wyman — It's All Over Now*. Mandy remembers how Wyman "transformed me from an innocent child into a little sex nymphet" and that later he made her feel "like a sex aid... I might as well have been a blow-up doll for all the attention he was giving to my sexual needs."

It is a tribute to Fuck's self-confidence and brio that he is prepared to discount such passages in his determination to win damages for his under-estimated client.

'The Marquesa'

Pseuds Corner

The person who tells me what to think or write does not exist. The Pope reads my books and I read his encyclicals, and that is about it.

PAUL JOHNSON
The Spectator

If you close your eyes, you can see music.

So let me paint you this: a wide sweep of beach, curving as if it's trying to close its arms around the sea. Rocky hills stacked up behind, jumbled and fading in the twilight, occasionally sprouting abstracts with trees and semi-trained jungle. The sun is short-circuiting into the ocean, roaring bloody orange until the moon finally mutes it. The stars come out and do their usual stuff.,

This is an album.

Crowded House just painted the scenery that surrounded them.

CAITLIN MORAN
The Times

In much of my work, I have used photography to explore the concept of scale as a metaphor for the shift in priority and value inherent in prison confinement. Behind this dry analysis has lain much essential and informative contact with the inmates of I Wing.

GREG LEACH (Artist in Residence, HM Prison Strangeways)

The bill was £117.40 for two, which I couldn't pay as I never have credit cards or money, but they'll send it on.

MICHAEL WINNER
Sunday Times

Janine Antoni's *Gnaw*, two minimal cubes of lard and chocolate, was one of the most memorable exhibits in the 1993 Whitney Biennial. Her group of chocolate and soap self-portrait busts, *Lick and Lather*, at the 1993 Venice Biennale, with their eroded features, was one of the most acclaimed installations in the Aperto section. For the opening of 'Strange Developments' at this gallery in 1993, Antoni used her hair and body as a paintbrush to cover the floor of 9 Dering Street with expressionist strokes of black hair dye in a work called *Loving Care*.

Press release:
Anthony d'Offay Gallery

I believe in fairies. I feel the fairies in my stomach. I communicate with them instinctively. I have communications with things you can't see or hear.

TORI AMOS
Mail on Sunday

My interest has mainly focused on seeing each line as a kind of "elongated" dot. When a dot is prolonged to a certain length it becomes a line, and lines can also be formed with several dots placed in succession. From the composer's viewpoint, the moot question is how long a dot should be elongated or how many dots one should place in a row in a particular context, so as to make listeners (the composer himself included) perceive a dot (or dots) as a line.

Jo Kendo
Edinburgh Contemporary Arts Trust

CONTRIBUTORS: R. Peberdy, S. Watkins, Anon, the late James Rusbridger, J. Boston, P. Harvey, G. Costell.

£10 paid for entries

OBSERVERS at the Scott inquiry were surprised by the truculent approach of the former foreign office minister Tristan Garel-Jones, who has left office to spend more time with Lloyd's of London.

Garel-Jones seemed incredulous that anyone should question a decision of a minister given his orders by the attorney-general. His obsequious approach to these matters surprised even his admirers, but he had given notice of his attitude some weeks earlier in a newspaper interview.

"I grade myself as a beta-plus plus," he said. Douglas Hurd is alpha. I have never had ideas above my station. So I thought when I went into politics that once I had discovered who the good people were, I would protect them come hell or high water against the baddies." — *Evening Standard*, 10 December 1993.

WILLIAM POWELL, the dripping wet Tory MP for Corby, was especially sanctimonious and indignant at his colleagues' recent bonk-to-basics activities.

During the Tim Yeo horizontal-in-Hackney affair, Powell, a sponsor of the Conservative Family Campaign, called on ministers to behave with dignity and uphold high standards in their private lives.

He should perhaps have kept his mouth shut. In 1989 Powell incurred gambling debts of £20,000 and ran crying to the Tory whips' office. Luckily the whips had a cure: they arranged for his debts to be paid off by a secret Tory party fund controlled by Tim Sainsbury, the industry minister.

Other Tory MPs, including one former cabinet minister, have also been bailed out by this curious fund. We bet the whips' office won't want to say who, however.

IN *EYE* 839 Backbiter reported the allegations of Tory MP Paul Marland that undue pressure had been put on MPs during the passage of the Lloyd's bill and that widespread corruption at Lloyd's followed in its wake.

What Backbiter did not mention was that the person whom Marland alleged had exerted the undue pressure was later identified in the Commons by Labour MP Paul Flynn. The accused was Marcus Kimball, then Tory MP for Gainsborough.

Lord Kimball, as he now is, will surely agree that such wicked allegations were a vile misuse of parliamentary privilege.

A NUMBER of innocuous sounding parliamentary questions have been put down recently concerning the use of ministerial cars.

Behind the questions is the less than innocent suggestion that a minister has been taken to gay clubs in his government motor — and this isn't a rehash of the half-baked "two cabinet members are gay lovers" story, either.

It is said that MI5 is interested, and there are rumours of gagging writs. What can it all mean?

"Even the Devil can't find work for idle hands nowadays"

ONE neglected aspect of Robert Maxwell's career is his commercial dealings with Sir Peter Emery, the pompous Tory MP for Honiton and a former trade and industry minister.

Emery did business with the old crook, from 1986 until his death in 1991, through the property company Winglaw Group Ltd. Emery was chairman and a director of Winglaw, and 20 percent of the shares were owned by Maxwell Communications Corporation plc and Bishopsgate Investment Management (BIM) Ltd — both Maxwell companies. BIM Ltd managed the Mirror Group pension funds which Cap'n Bob pillaged.

Emery seemed happy to do business with Maxwell. In 1988 joint ventures were set up, and in 1990 the Tory MP gloated: "I am delighted to report that the Group's involvement with companies associated with Mr Robert Maxwell has continued to be satisfactory. This has resulted in further successful joint ventures." That year Winglaw donated £5,000 to the Tory party.

Emery had good reason to be "delighted": he made a lot of money out of Winglaw. He paid himself a salary of £25,000 a year and in both 1990 and 1991 received a cool commission fee of £200,000.

Another Maxwell connection with Emery's company was its managing director and principal shareholder, Joseph Estandi. An Iranian property developer, he struck a deal with Maxwell in 1988 when he bought the State House building in High Holborn from the tycoon for £65 million. After Maxwell died, Estandi continued his association with the family, paying part of the legal fees for Kevin Maxwell.

THE government is determined to press ahead with daft clauses in the coal industry bill which allow private mining companies to seize land compulsorily from unwilling owners and hence scar the countryside with opencast mines.

This madness stems from ministers' insistence that opencasting by private firms is "in the national interest" (*Eyes passim*) — while keeping proper coal mines open and members of Arthur Scargill's National Union of Mineworkers in work is presumably not in the national interest.

LABOUR MPs were surprised to hear Tessa Jowell had been appointed PPS to David Blunkett, Labour's chief health spokesman. There is no such post.

Eyebrows were raised further when Jowell sent out a leaflet telling people in Dulwich that she had been "appointed" to Labour's frontbench. Labour leader John Smith has announced no such appointment.

Nevertheless Blunkett refers to Jowell as "the coordinator of London's health services". Naturally this irritates Dawn Primarolo, who thought she was in charge of London's health services for Labour, but she has effectively been demoted.

There are ideological differences between Primarolo, a Campaign Group member who voted to lower the age of homosexual consent to 16, and Blunkett, an all-over-the-place moderniser who voted against.

Blunkett is a difficult man to get on with. As one senior consultant of a London hospital told Backbiter: "It's not just difficult to talk to Blunkett, it's impossible. He doesn't listen."

LABOUR MP Tony Banks has finally accepted that his parliamentary colleagues really are a bunch of oversexed useless cretins.

Last month he told the *New Statesman*: "It's getting quite fashionable to shag an MP these days, I'm glad to say..." Then, in the chamber and to the annoyance of the speaker, Betty Boothroyd, Banks said that MPs would welcome the introduction of condom machines in the Palace of Westminster.

Is this the same Tony Bonks who on 8 March 1988 moved a motion to report *Guardian* hack Andrew Rawnsley to the committee of privileges and have him slung out of the lobby merely because Rawnsley had described 200 Labour MPs as being "incompetent, lazy drunks"? After a three-hour debate Bonks was forced to withdraw when Labour MPs accused him of being a po-faced and censorious.

WHILE the *meejah* gave fat column inches and airtime to the forthcoming departure of Roy Hattersley, everyone missed the real reason for his resignation, first predicted in the *Eye* months ago.

Anyone who bothered to contact Labour party officials in his Birmingham Sparkbrook constituency would have discovered that the Tub of Lard had in fact been desperate to stay on.

But unfortunately for him, the Boundary Commission has decided to amalgamate Sparkbrook with adjacent Small Heath — home of the notorious Roger Godsiff (*Eyes passim*), a London-based GMB union official who won the Labour selection for Sparkbrook after it was inundated with delegates from the GMB and closely-allied EETPU unions.

Meanwhile Hattersley has been ignoring his own power-base and spending his time producing really, er, interesting articles for the *Guardian*. He even allowed one of his staunchest supporters, Andrew Lydon, to go to jail for two days in an action that resulted from Lydon's attempts to fight Godsiff's manipulation of the votes wielded by the West Midlands Co-op.

Eventually he woke up to what was happening — and embarked on desperate consultation with Labour's west Midlands regional official, Fraser Kemp. Kemp checked the figures and found that Fattersley was doomed in any head-to-head with Godsiff.

Dignified resignation was Fattersley's only option: being beaten in a selection by a nonentity like Godsiff would have been too appalling.

Hattersley's parting barb was to announce that he hoped he would be succeeded by an Asian. What he meant was — anyone but Godsiff.

IT'S NOT all bad news for beleaguered foreign office minister Alastair Goodlad. The Malaysians may have taken criticism of their trade practices to heart, but Britain still retains credibility with others in the region — Cambodia's Khmer Rouge, for example.

Blue sapphires originating from the Khmer Rouge-controlled Pailin zone of Cambodia remain welcome imports to the UK. In reply to a public spirited citizen's concern at this trade, the minister replied: "We have studied a proposal for a moratorium on the trade in Pailin blue sapphires as a means of cutting Khmer Rouge income but have concluded that an effective ban (even if it could be agreed) would be almost impossible to enforce."

By contrast, United States customs officers are ready and willing to stop Pailin blue sapphires — labelled Thailand — at points of entry. They have the technology to define to a high degree of accuracy the origin of the stones, as well as legislation prohibiting the entry of mislabelled products.

'Backbiter'

ONE IN THE EYE

"Another man considering a similar route [out of the civil service] is Sir Clive Whitmore at the home office. Whitmore is more right wing than [Sir Geoffrey] Holland [who had just resigned as permanent secretary at education in disgust with John Patten]... He was been a conservative under-secretary at the home office since he went there in 1988, but he is disgusted by Michael Howard's 'soundbite' approach to policy, especially to prison reform and criminal justice."

— *Private Eye lead, 3 December 1993.*

"One of Whitehall's most senior civil servants, Sir Clive Whitmore, Permanent Under Secretary to the Home Office, is to quit for a well-paid job in the private sector. He follows Sir Geoffrey Holland... Sir Clive has made it clear in private that he is dismayed by the low standard of political competence displayed both by Mr Howard and the government as a whole."

— *Observer, 6 March 1994.*

NOOKS and CORNERS

HALSWELL HOUSE, near Goathurst, Somerset, built by Sir Halswell Tynte in 1689, consists of a grand stone block containing fine state rooms added to an earlier house behind. Pevsner described this handsome Classical pile as "the most important house of its date in the county" and it is listed Grade I.

Today it is in divided ownership, dilapidated and poorly maintained, with water pouring through part of the roof, while the existing residents are subject to harassment and malicious damage. How can this be? It is a curious tale.

In 1948 Halswell House was sold to Mr Clarence Harris, who divided up much of it into flats. In 1985 his executors sold the house to Mr T.M. Davey and Mr J.B. Tuckey. Mr Tuckey is a landscape architect and a restorer of old buildings who hoped to spend his declining years in the splendid north front. Mr Davey is, or was, a solicitor and property owner who is now bankrupt.

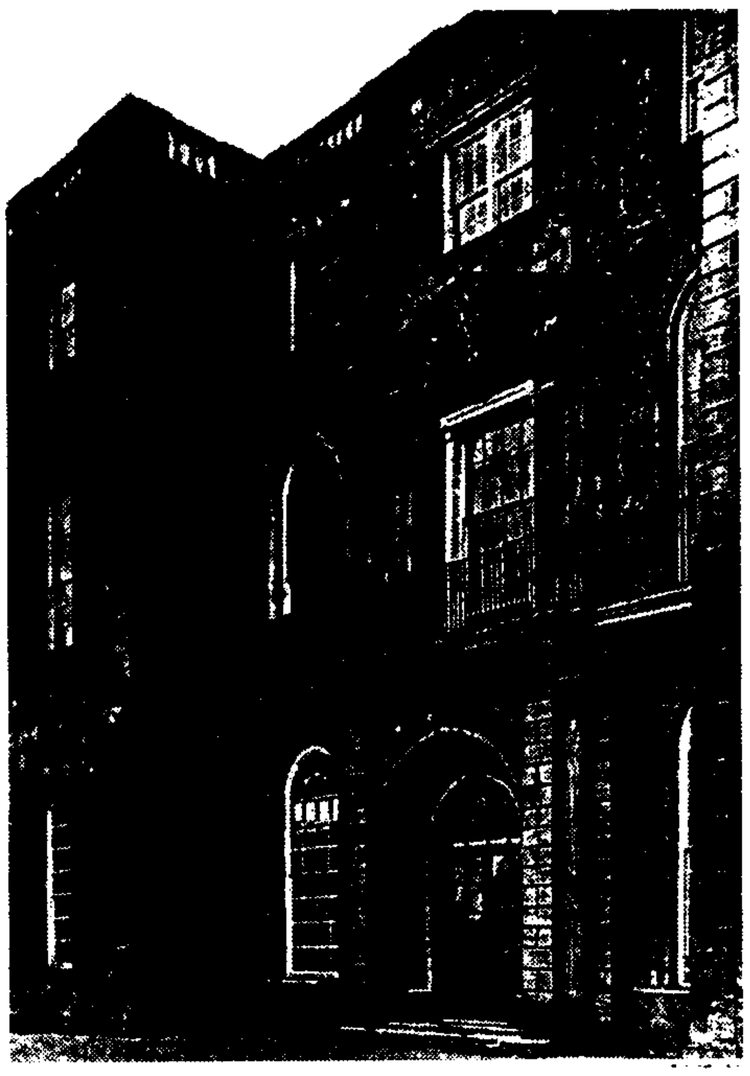
He did not look after Halswell House: the building continued to deteriorate and part of the roof was replaced by tarpaulin. Nor did he prove to be an ideal landlord: tenants found themselves threatened, their property damaged and the police had to be called on several occasions.

In 1991 the owners of Halswell House admitted that they could not restore the building — offers of grant aid had already been turned down by Mr Davey — when planning permission was sought to convert the north front into offices and a sale of the contents was held. The money raised was not spent on the house but used to purchase Chota Castle near Bristol, which has since been repossessed by the Royal Bank of Scotland.

In 1992, Mr Davey decided to use the older, Tudor part of Halswell House for a "housing scheme". This was supported by Lloyds Bank, against the advice of its consultant, DTZ Debenham Thorpe, and poor quality alterations were carried out.

In April 1993 the north front was repossessed by the Britannia Building Society. Poor Mr Tuckey thought he owned this in his own name, but apparently he did not. He left the house, became seriously ill, and is now somewhat out of things.

Potential purchasers of the north front were actively discouraged from visiting the property, which presented a forlorn appearance. In the event it was bought at a bargain price by a consortium of Mr Davey's business acquaintances. Meanwhile, in June 1993, Davey was declared bankrupt. Since



then, the future of the back of the house remains uncertain as Lloyds Bank tries to dispose of it.

The long-suffering residents of the house came together and offered Lloyds £150,000 for the property. They were then outbid by the same "consortium" of Mr Davey's cronies, at one stage known as Parkway Investments (Isle of Man) and fronted by Mr Amir Khadobai, proprietor of the well-known Lockleaze service station outside Bristol, who offered £200,000.

The Halswell residents then offered £25,000 more, plus interest, if the payments could be phased over a period. This sane and fair offer Lloyds Bank declines to consider. In whose interests is the bank acting? Certainly not that of a Grade I listed building. Parkway Investments, by the way, has been struck off the company list for failing to supply the required information and accounts.

Many aspects of this sorry tale are familiar. Far too many fine and beautiful houses are brought low by naive or incompetent purchasers or by dubious companies which think they can make a quick profit out of property. But there are peculiar circumstances in this case which invite questions.

Why, when SAVE Britain's Heritage, the Georgian Group and English Heritage have all expressed concern, has supine, useless Sedgmoor district council done virtually nothing to secure the future of one of the finest houses in Somerset? And why is Lloyds Bank so anxious to assist the property-owning dreams of a declared bankrupt whose actions up until now have been consistently anti-social and anti-architecture? Poor old Halswell House, meanwhile, continues to rot...

"I CONTINUE to be disappointed by the low standard of literacy, accuracy and the level of arrogance as well as the time taken to return draft replies for Red Jacket correspondence, some of which appears to be handled by junior staff..." So begins an internal memo on the subject of "Red Jackets" from the chairman of English Heritage. This was leaked to me by an inmate of Fortress House.

I am puzzled by this: does Jocelyn Stevens intend further to humiliate and degrade his long-suffering staff by dressing them all up as Butlins Redcoats? This, perhaps, would succinctly express the managerial values of the Glorious Thatcher Years. But I think we should be told.

'Piloti'

SALLY DEEDES

MAGGIE SHEEHY lives in a rented cottage in rural Cornwall with her two children. She has water and a telephone, but no electricity.

When last year she asked South Western Electricity (SWEB) for an estimate to connect the cottage to the mains, she was told £11,500 — or £20,000 over an extended period at £39 per week. SWEB told her: "Due to the need to obtain various consents, ie wayleave permission to cross private land, it is likely to be several months before we will be able to complete the connection."

British Telecom, by contrast, installed a phone in Mrs Sheehy's cottage six months ago, taking its line approximately the *same distance* across fields as the electricity cables would have to go. Including phone poles, labour and equipment, BT charged her just £168 and the equipment was installed three weeks after Mrs Sheehy ordered it.

SWEB took five months even to give Mrs Sheehy a written price of £8,500, and Mrs Sheehy is still having to pay for a trench to be dug on top of the high installation charge. SWEB's costs include £3,560 for labour; £538 for transport (all of 15 to 20 miles); and £1,523 for design and commission.

I asked how it could justify such high charges given the quick and inexpensive BT installation. A spokeswoman said: "The length of time is fairly standard since we have to consult the other utilities: water, gas etc." But surely BT had to do the same? "I can't speak for them, but I'm sure they should have done."

And the disparity in cost? "BT can cross subsidise. But under our licence we are forbidden to carry out work like this at a reduced rate. After all, if the property is connected to electricity the value of that house goes up accordingly."

The same situation arises in the Scottish Highlands, where scattered communities are not cost-effective targets. One has to pay through the nose for privatised services — that are more essential in remote areas — than anywhere else in the UK.

A READER from Cambridge rang the social security benefits helpline, and after a long wait an answer machine told him: "Due to a heating problem it has not been possible to open the building today, Thursday 30 December. Normal service will be resumed tomorrow."

The reader telephoned** at the end of February, **so perhaps VAT on heating is hurting more than the elderly and infirm.

YORKSHIRE Water is expected to come down hard on Hickson and Welch, the company that allowed 400 gallons of the toxic nitrotoluene to pour down a drain, damaging Yorkshire Water's sewage works and polluting the River Aire.

The chemical was involved in an explosion two years ago which killed five workers at the same Hickson and Welch factory in Castleford, and Yorkshire Water is said to be considering legal action over this latest incident.

But it is a delicate matter. Yorkshire Water's part-time chairman is Sir Gordon Jones... and Gordon's day job is chairman of that popular chemicals firm Hickson and Welch in Castleford!

HUSBAND
Right here it comes drop it now!
Great fun.. see ya tomorrow!
The police 'ave been. Yer mums dead. Some Bastard dropped a concrete slab through the train window

TV

Here And Now Do The Right Thing (both BBC1)

IN A MOOD of untypical generosity, Square Eyes is this week going to say nice things about two new BBC1 series. Both are lively, populist, and likely to be popular. They also constitute — and here the gloves come off — an extraordinary v-sign delivered to the director-general by his senior staff.

Here and Now — Wednesdays at 7.30pm — has been billed as *Son of Nationwide* by idiotic critics who think there isn't much difference between a show on for an hour every weekday and one running for 30 minutes a week. Nor — as had been equally widely rumoured — does it seem to be the BBC's subjection to Martyn Lewis's demands for more huggy, upbeat news.

In fact, *Here and Now* is a skilled rip-off of American "news magazine" shows like *60 Minutes, Now* and *Prime Time*. The first show contained three stories — Jeremy Bowen's unashamedly personalised account of the state of little Irma, the girl airlifted out of Bosnia by press and public demands; the desperate plight of some Welsh pensioners hit by the government's VAT on fuel; and the death of a woman in a stage hypnotism act.

This is frisky, in-your-face tabloid journalism, with subjectivity from the reporters (particularly Bowen) and even elements of polemic, or at least subversion, in the show's casual explanation of how to stop the government pocketing the VAT money.

Which is all very odd because the style of journalism preached by the current DG, John Birt, is not at all in-your-face but, frankly, up-your-arse: objective, analytical, cool. And object, if you want, that *Here and Now* accounts for only 30 minutes of the weekly current affairs output, but bizarrely, Bowen's Irma bulletin was extracted in both the six and nine o'clock bulletins on the day of *Here and Now*'s debut.

What's happening is that a new doctrine- Yentobism — is beginning to show up in the BBC1 schedules. It's a kind of mildly astringent populism. Even the new Terry Wogan vehicle, **Do The Right Thing**, is not as goofy as was feared when it was heard that the most popular format on Brazilian — yes, Brazilian — television was being adapted for the host of the late *Wogan*.

I-BSkyB

SKY ON HIGH WITH SOCCER

☐ **HOT ON TV . . . Sky's soccer coverage—talk about more hot matches than Swan Vestas. It's worth the price of a dish alone.**

GARRY BUSHELL
The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: M. Turner

Covering all possible format angles by featuring dramatised extracts, celebrity panel discussion, phone vote and audience interviews, *Do The Right thing* shows playlets — after recent experiences with BBC1 drama, the controller has cleverly found a way of limiting it to five minute bursts — posing moral dilemmas. Would you give back £50 if you found it and were very poor. Well, then, how about £50,000? Well, okay, but what if the 50K turned out to be the only thing standing between an orphanage and closure?

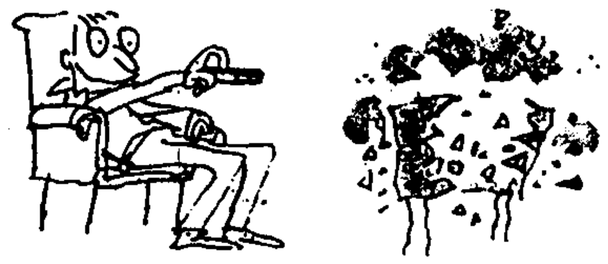
Much of this is tacky — for example, interludes in which the studio audience dashes between Yes and No pens — but there are hidden tin-tacks too. The hero of the money-finding playlet is unemployed; wickedly, a brief burst of a news report about Lady Porter and Westminster council is heard in the background to one of the scenes, suggesting a context of public amorality. And one of the panellist is the far from safe Frank Skinner. Of course, the BBC can't be seen to endorse dishonesty — so Wogan is required to propagandise legality — but it isn't sociologically uninteresting that 61 percent of viewers phoning in to vote took the view that it's all right to nick £50,000 even if an orphanage closes down as a result.

Now here's an interesting moral dilemma. You're the controller of BBC1 at a time when the corporation has never faced greater competition for audiences. The director-general has publicly espoused two policies which touch directly on your programming. One is that news and current affairs should become more serious and analytical. The other is that the BBC should not worry too much about ratings and should concentrate on the "Himalayan peaks" of distinctive broadcasting.

What would you do in this position? What Alan Yentob has done is to burn the memos and do his own thing — a thing which happens to be the exact opposite of the requirements publicly outlined by his boss — by premiering in the same week both the least Birtist of BBC news shows in living memory and the least Himalayan home-grown show produced in the same period, plundering, respectively, American and Brazilian theories of TV.

Yentob's is a brave and intriguing policy: a bit of a Hezza strategy, really. Never publicly anything but loyal to his masters, he established himself through nearly every scheduling act as the polar opposite. In short, John Birt's senior programme controller is quietly and cheerfully burying Birtism.

'Square Eyes'



MEDIA NEWS

PERHAPS the most surprising comment on the Pergau dam affair was to be found in the *Sunset Times*.

It reported that Malaysia's deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim "alleged a Murdoch inspired vendetta against Malaysia for refusing access to the Malaysian market by Star TV, his Asian satellite station. There was, and is, no truth in the accusation, as the editor of *The Sunday Times* made clear yesterday..."

Rupert Murdoch was apparently very, very unhappy at Star being snubbed. But perhaps the Malaysians got the wrong impression after taking a recent editorial in the *Sun* too seriously. It said Britain mustn't criticise the Chinese government in case it made things difficult for investors in Hong Kong — by banning satellite dishes, for example.

Maybe the Malaysians thought — quite ludicrously — that there was a link between Murdoch selling a pro-democracy newspaper to a Beijing proxy and investing the proceeds in the Hong Kong-based Star, and the tone of subsequent coverage in the Murdoch press. Clearly they were wrong.

There have been similar misunderstandings elsewhere, notably in India which has just been visited by Murdoch as part of his tour of countries targeted by Star. He apparently told politicians that he (rather than nasty Ted Turner or the bullies from Time Warner) should be given immediate access to a state-controlled satellite transponder. He could then help save Indian youngsters from being corrupted by western decadence, in particular by dreaded MTV.

Absurdly, Murdoch is alleged to have said that he doesn't even allow his own children to watch the music station, such is his distaste for it. This of course must be complete nonsense, for MTV is not only currently available via Star but is zealously promoted by BSkyB to boost dish sales in Europe. Any suggestion that Murdoch has given up hope of persuading MTV to renew its contract with Star and is now rubbishing it while secretly planning to launch his own rival music channel is absurd.

Similarly untrue, no doubt, are rumours that Murdoch is planning to bow to Beijing and replace BBC World Service TV with a new international version of Sky News, with material from London slotted into Hong Kong-anchored live coverage. There would be no point to such a move as, in the event of things going wrong after the People's Army arrives in 1997, Sky would surely provide exactly the same objective reporting as, for example, Kate Adie did at Tiananmen Square.

Also ridiculous are smears to the effect that senior Chinese government officials and their relatives might one day benefit financially from Star being permitted to introduce decoders and collect subscription fees after Beijing takes control in Hong Kong. Amazing how many mis-conceptions surround the great communicator...

FURTHER evidence emerges of progressive management attitudes at John Birt's BBC.

A "business training" firm named Padgett Thompson is running a series of one-day seminars around the country during April to teach "the skills and techniques you need to turn an employee's unsatisfactory attitude into a concrete reason for dismissal... you'll be able to dismiss problem employees legally, safely and confidently".

For a fee of £150, those attending the course will also learn "a way to catch and document employees who are disrespectful to you behind your back" — and then sack them. The brochure for the course prints a list of organisations that have benefited from Padgett Thompson's seminars — including, surprise surprise, BBC Television.

THE BBC's chaotic news and current affairs "directorate" is getting ready for the biggest internecine battle of its history as hordes of hacks and freeloading apparatchiks prepare for their great trek to the forthcoming South African elections.

The first shot has already been fired. John Harrison, the Beeb's resident television man in South Africa, was astounded to spot *Nine O'Clock News* presenter Michael Buerk slinking through Johannesburg's Jan Smuts airport, apparently desperate to avoid detection. Pressed for an explanation, Buerk admitted he had been sent to interview Nelson Mandela for *Panorama*, with strict instructions not to betray his presence to the BBC's Johannesburg bureau. The assembly for the election will include John Simpson, John Humphrys, Michael Buerk, Anna Ford, Peter Sissons, Nicholas Witchell and Jeremy Paxman. All are already angling for "exclusive" interviews with the leading players, and all will be accompanied by an army of "producers" and unnecessary hangers-on.

A special studio with a panoramic view of Johannesburg has been built at vast expense on the roof of the BBC's imposing office building. So far, 142 "business class" air tickets have been bought and 156 hotel rooms booked in Johannesburg, Capetown and Durban.

How this tallies with John Birt's determination to avoid "unnecessary duplication" in news coverage is a mystery.

ARMANDO IANNUCCI, producer of *The Day Today*, has been putting his astonishing thoughts into print.

He wrote recently in the *Guardian*: "There's nothing, apart from drinking a pint of goat's toss, more guaranteed to make you sick up than a man, woman or celebrity in a desperate quest for publicity."

Could this be the same Armando Iannucci who has recently hired his own personal publicist, one Roxy Meade, in a desperate bid to get on television and into the papers? Presumably not.

CONRAD BLACK has been hurt by rude remarks made about him in Australia by Malcolm Turnbull, the famous *Spycatcher* lawyer.

It all started when Conrad's memoirs, *A Life in Progress*, referred to Turnbull, a former business colleague, as "uncontrollably belligerent and histrionic, threatening vengeance on people, including occasionally himself".

Mr Turnbull has had his vengeance, it seems. For last month he told an Australian senate inquiry, under the protection of privilege, that Conrad was a liar and an "extraordinary egoist". He also said: "I do not believe his word can be trusted on matters where his own involvement is concerned. His book is full of misrepresentations and he, in my experience of him, has almost no regard for telling the truth."

STUART PREBBLE, controller of factual programmes at ITV Network Centre, has replaced prestigious series such as *First Tuesday* and *Disappearing World* with *Network First* in the 10.40pm slot.

The first film in the new series was a dreary piece about lesbian kids by a first-time American director. This may sound very PC, but the director concerned was one Catherine Buchanan.

Coincidentally, Buchanan used to, er, network with Prebble quite regularly during his time at Granada.

HACKWATCH: Michael Winner

ON 11 July last year, the *Sunday Times*'s exceedingly unstylish "Style" section launched Restaurant Watch, "a new service to ensure readers the highest standards in Britain's restaurants".

This "service" consisted of a weekly column by the ludicrous film director Michael Winner, under the arch heading "Winner's Dinners", plus an even more ludicrous blue coupon bearing the inscription: "ATTENTION RESTAURANT STAFF: Please ensure the customer displaying this coupon enjoys the best possible service and a fine meal."

All readers had to do, the paper explained, was "place this coupon on your table to ensure the highest standards of service and an enjoyable meal". Quite how a bit of blue newsprint would have this effect was never explained. After a few months, the coupon was dropped.

If only Michael Winner had met the same fate. But then he is a close friend of Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill, and therefore unsackable. Here are samples of his oeuvre — not to mention his *hors d'oeuvres*:

18 July 1993: Nothing annoys Winner more than people who don't realise how immensely famous he is. "I phoned the Ivy recently, and a man named Francois Valerio came on. Me: 'Hello, this is Michael Winner.' Him: 'Yeah.' Me: 'Are you the head waiter?' Him: 'Yeah.' Me: 'Is that how you answer the phone at the Ivy?' Him: 'Wha' d'you want?' Me: 'I did want to book a table, but I don't now.' "

26 July: The first of many puffs for Johnny Gold, who owns Tramp — the nightclub to which both Winner and Andrew Neill belong. Since Gold took over the Belvedere restaurant in Holland Park, we learn, it has attracted a "hyper-glittering" clientele. "You might even see Andrew Neil, Joan Collins and Michael Caine." Pass the Alka Seltzer...

29 August: Following his recent attack on the Ivy, Winner dines there and is "surprised" to see that its owner "studiously avoided greeting our table as he worked the room". Winner wonders which of his famous guests was the cause of this snub: "Does he not like Michael York? Had he not enjoyed one of Sidney Sheldon's novels? Had he fallen out with Ned Ryan? Or was it me?" Of course it was, you fat fool.

19 September: More name-dropping. Winner has visited the Hyde Park Hotel, where his host was... Michael Caine!

26 September: To Cafe Fish, where Winner's party includes his then girlfriend, Jenny Seagrove, and "my friend John Cleese".

17 October: Winner goes to the fashionable London eaterie Daphne's — but once again his evening is wrecked by the discovery that not everyone knows him by sight. "I asked: 'Where's my table?' 'What name did you book in?' was the reply. 'My own,' I snapped. If Miss Seagrove had not been held up in the hall, I would have walked out."

31 October: "The clientele at Claridge's is a wonderful mix. I have dined adjacent to or with Francis Bacon, Margaret Thatcher, Sophia Loren, Robert Mitchum and Jack Lemmon." Well done!

14 November: Another puff for the Belvedere — now owned, he reminds us, by Mr Johnny Gold, proprietor of Tramp nightclub.

21 November: Praise for the French Horn at Sonning. "I have taken some of the greatest Hollywood stars there... The only time I was a tiny bit let down was when I took Peter Falk there."

28 November: After years of stuffing himself, Winner has succumbed to the inevitable and had open-heart surgery. On the day before leaving hospital, he is given permission to visit the local branch of Patisserie Valerie. "The Rolls drew solemnly up at the hospital entrance. I was ready in my Turnbull & Asser silk dressing gown." Accompanied by his new girlfriend Catherine Neilson, he drives the few yards to the cafe. "There we devoured cakes."

5 December: Still convalescing, Winner nevertheless manages to visit Il Portico and drop a few names. "Its clientele ranges from locals to John Wells, and Peter and Anthony Shaffer, and when my friend Don Black, the Andrew Lloyd Webber lyricist, moved in opposite, he greatly thanked me for recommending it." He also attends a wedding at the house of his great friend John Cleese, where the flowers are arranged by Tomasz Starzewski — "by day a famous dress designer for Shakira Caine and the Princess of Wales, among others".

26 December: The Bombay Brasserie gets an admiring write-up. But, as so often with Winner, it seems that the quality of nosh is not the primary consideration. "As I never carry money or credit cards, I need managements of particular tolerance. At the Bombay they lend me, from time to time, a fiver to tip the doorman who parks my car."

2 January 1994: Off to the West Indies for a new year orgy of conspicuous consumption ("at the Sandy Lane Hotel, Barbados, it is very easy to run up a bill of more than £1,200 a night") and name-dropping. On previous Christmas trips to Sandy Lane, his companions have included Andrew Neill, "the editor of Britain's most distinguished Sunday newspaper". This time he is accompanied by John Cleese. In the hotel restaurant, to Winner's outrage, "an attempt was made to throw John Cleese and our party of nine people out because Mr Cleese had smart, white jeans on! It was only me being somewhat direct in my view of the matter that won us a one-evening reprieve!"

9 January 1994: Winner is still flashing his wad in the Caribbean. ("My two return Concorde air fares to Barbados were £8,000 on their own!") In St Lucia — where he once filmed "with Sophia Loren" — he finds that "my old friend [Lord] Glenconner is in a state of high excitement about his new culinary enterprise, including a rum shop and souvenir place... Mustique it isn't! But jolly it is!"

16 January: Back from his hols, Winner reveals that he paid £29,000 for 22 nights in the Sandy Lane Hotel. But he is in a foul mood, because his breakfast scrambled eggs were overcooked.

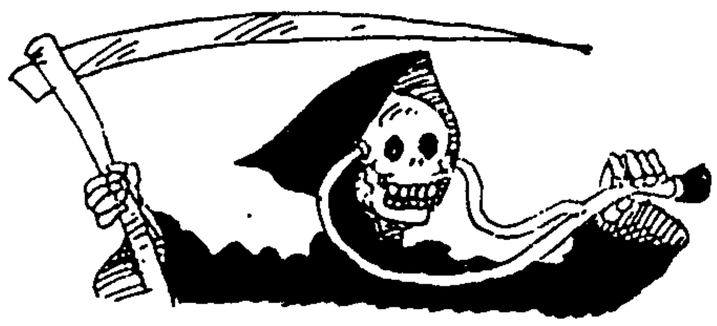
23 January: "One of the worst dinners I ever had in my life was some four years ago in a basement called Downstairs At 190. The chef was Anthony Worrall Thompson, and my host was a well-known movie star..."

30 January: Is there no end to the glamour of a film director's life? Apparently not. "I joined the discotheque Tramp in July 1970, shortly after it opened. There the food, simple and well-done, is served among the amazing cacophony of old-fashioned dolly birds, not infrequent major movie stars and even a well-known newspaper editor."

6 February: Winner visits the Forte-owned Cafe Royal grill room, where he dines with "the international jeweller Miss Dorrit Moussaieff". (*Who she? Ed.*) "The bill was £117.40 for two, which I couldn't pay as I never have credit cards or money, but they'll send it on. Forte has done it! A triumph!"

20 February: A month after his Caribbean jaunt, Winner is on holiday again, this time at the Palace Hotel in Gstaad. "The maitre d', Gildo Bocchini, has been there 25 years and dealt, skilfully, with nearly every multi-millionaire you could mention. He's even good with the common folk, if any can afford the prices! My bill was £3,000 for three nights." But it is not all plain sailing. " 'This is not what I asked for,' I said as a lady showed me the suite. 'We're full, it's all we've got, I'm afraid,' was the answer. I at once rang the excellent resident manager. 'Mr Ferrari,' I said. 'You told my assistant I would have the same suite I always have.' 'You do, sir,' said Mr Ferrari. 'I am looking at a flat roof, a chimney and a floodlight,' I responded. 'I have never seen these items before. If I want to look at chimneys I can stay in London. The second floor, Mr Ferrari, is *unacceptable*.' A suite on the sixth floor miraculously became available."

27 February: Still in Switzerland, Winner enjoys "a jolly lunch with the international set" at the Saanenhof. They include Roger Moore "and his lovely wife, Luisa (one of my favourite people)". Better still, "at our table was the King of Spain's cousin." Surrounded by all these toffs and megastars, even Winner is unable to find anything to complain about.



DOING THE ROUNDS

VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY's lamentable defence of community psychiatric care in the wake of the Clunis report centred on a small increase in the number of community psychiatric nurses (CPNs). At present, there are 5,000 CPNs... and six million people with mental health problems.

Only one schizophrenic in five has access to a CPN, and there are likely to be at least 100 patients as disturbed as Christopher Clunis, who stabbed Jonathan Zito to death at Finsbury Park tube in 1992, walking around **London** at the moment.

Ironically, it was public outcry at the lack of community supervision of such disturbed patients which initially lead to the construction of long-stay psychiatric hospitals, many of which have now been closed.

The report has asked for an urgent increase in the number of medium-secure beds in south east London, where 45 percent of GPs have no access to mental health professionals whatsoever, and more general psychiatric beds in inner London.

In **Birmingham**, meanwhile, the new £13 million **Queen Elizabeth Psychiatric Hospital** is "so noisy, the deaf can't sleep", according to a community health council report. "The thin walls, low ceilings, poor ventilation and artificial lighting give an oppressive and uncongenial atmosphere to a unit which should be note-worthy in its mood enhancing capacity."

In **Northern Ireland**, 40 mental health nurses at **Western Health Board mental health unit**, have been offered the choice between unemployment or downgrading to health care assistants.

● **SANDWELL Health Plan**, a consortium of 45 fundholding GPs in the **west Midlands**, has made a down-payment of £35,000 on new premises to cover "disruption to the business that already occupied the property". The property is owned by Athelston Sealey, chairman of **Sandwell FHSA**. Regional health authority auditors are looking into the matter. At **Pembrokeshire NHS trust** Brian Davis, the chief executive with a red Porsche 994 S2 coupé for a company car (*Eyes passim*), has quit.

● THE top three bust trusts for the last financial year were **Broadgreen** hospital, **Liverpool** (£3.78 million in debt); **Royal Liverpool University Hospital** (£2.09 million); and **Shithouse trust (aka Wellhouse), Barnet, north London** (£1.96 million).

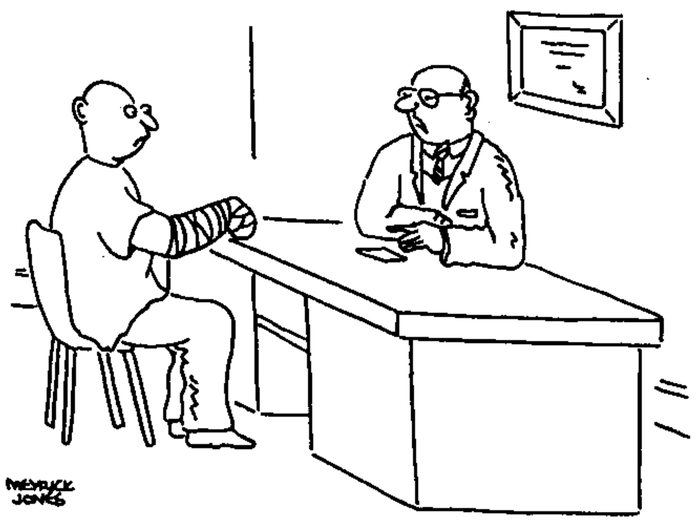
● IN **Somerset**, fundholding GPs at **Taunton's Blackbrook surgery, Wellington Health Centre** and three **Bridgewater** practices have awarded a £750,000 contract for district nurses and health visitors to **Cornwall health care trust** because they don't like the "style of management" at **Taunton and Somerset NHS trust**.

The troubled trust, which has a waiting time of 11-48 weeks for an initial non-urgent gynaecology appointment, has had difficulty coping with emergency admissions since the ill-advised closure of **Trinity geriatric hospital** (*Eyes passim*). Sixty elderly patients have been transferred to totally inappropriate medical and surgical beds, and the emergency admissions unit (EAU) is constantly full.

Three hundred routine operations have been cancelled due to lack of beds and those patients who are admitted are given a bed only just before their operation. "This creates difficulty with pre-operative assessment resulting in increased risk of mistakes and extra distress for patients. Letters of complaint about these deficiencies are commonplace."

● ON 10 JANUARY an elderly man was admitted to the acute assessment ward at **Bath's United hospital** following a fall at his residential home. Three days later, he was announced fit for discharge but the residential home would not accept him until he had had rehabilitation at **St Martin's geriatric hospital**.

The waiting list for this was four weeks, during which time he occupied an acute medical bed without any rehabilitation while his condition deteriorated and he developed a chest infection. When he finally reached St Martin's he died two hours after arrival.



"I'm sorry — having overspent my budget, all I can do is offer to kiss it better"

Chris Kirby, a virtually blind 73-year-old man on income support has been charged £28 by **Coventry and Warwickshire hospital** for a pair of special reading glasses. Mr Kirby hopes to have saved up the money by Christmas.

● **SWANSEA'S Morriston hospital has invited private companies to tender for its entire NHS cardiology service, including 600 open heart operations a year. But at Darlington's Memorial hospital**, plans to flog off a theatre and orthopaedic wards to **Independent British hospitals** appear to have floundered. As chief executive John Saxby put it: "I am not satisfied with the financial package."

● **STRATHCLYDE regional council has closed the Glengova residential home** for the elderly in **Glasgow** after a team of inspectors found faeces on the sponge used to clean all the residents, dentures kept in a mouldy container, dirty fridges containing food past its sell by date, soiled sheets rinsed in cold water and put back on the bed and £51 spent per week on food for all 11 residents. As owner and GP Dr Rahda Sarker said: "There were never any complaints from residents. It was the relatives who complained. It's all been made up."

● LIKE BEDS, quality management is in short supply at **St James's Hospital, Leeds,** where nurses are threatening industrial action after being told to sign "flexible" new contracts. The normally timid nurses are also angry at plans to turn one wing into a medical museum — with the loss of 36 beds.

● A SURVEY of 234 consultants carried out by the **Royal College of Surgeons** has revealed that a third have been told to treat patients of fundholding GPs "only or selectively". They were also ordered to give priority to treating patients from outside the hospital catchment area.

One of the surgeons, Mr Paddy Ross, who works at the **Royal Hampshire county hospital** and is chairman of the joint consultants' committee, is to resign on 30 March, the day before his hospital becomes the **Winchester and Eastleigh healthcare trust**. Mr Ross claims the reforms were "ill thought out and introduced by diktat resulting in a divided profession and a two-tier service, with money siphoned off to create trusts and fundholders that should have been spent on patients, and managers making clinical decisions to balance the books."

His new job is dean of clinical studies at **St George's University School of Medicine... Grenada.**

M.D.

Bankers

WHAT happens when an upright citizen disputes withdrawals from a cash machine at his or her bank or building society? Disaster may happen.

In 1992, John Munden, a police constable with 19 years' service in the Cambridge constabulary and a commendation from his chief constable, complained to the manager of his Halifax building society in Newmarket about six withdrawals he had not made. The society refused to accept that security was at fault and accused Mr Munden of fraud.

Last month the case came before Mildenhall magistrates, who heard that five of the six withdrawals were made from outside the branch, the sixth from the lobby. For the Halifax a Mr Beresford maintained that fraudulent transactions were rarely made in the lobby because of security cameras (in this instance the camera was faulty).

But he later admitted that the Halifax had on record some 200 "unresolved" transactions over the last three years and that it would be possible for a villain to observe someone's PIN number at an automatic teller machine (ATM) and make up a card to use on that account. He confirmed that the person who had conducted the investigation into Mr Munden's claims — and who was never called to give evidence — had no technical qualifications.

Then came Mr Dawson, the Halifax technical support manager who had written its online system and was responsible for its maintenance. Initially he said that to duplicate a card the forger would need the institution "identifier", the account number, expiry date, service code, property digit and card version number. He concluded that a forger would have to have had access to the original card. However, it turned out that the ATM system only checks the institution number, account and card version number. He further claimed that there was no record of an incorrect version number being used.

How then to explain that Mr Munden's card was "version number two"? Version number one, though created, had not been issued and no one could explain its whereabouts. Mr Dawson had never visited the Newmarket branch but had merely looked at the mainframe records to see whether any fault records or error codes had shown up. He found none and took this at face value. The Halifax has no computer security function as such; just internal auditors and technical staff.

The Newmarket branch manager was then called. He agreed that as a matter of policy balancing records were kept for two years. Not withstanding this, the relevant records for Mr Munsden could not be found. In addition, when Mr Munden first complained about the withdrawals, his branch manager asked him how his holiday in Ireland had gone. Mr Munden had never been to Ireland. It later transpired that the transaction code on one of the ATM withdrawals corresponded with a branch in Omagh. This did not show up in the records that were eventually presented in court.

Despite the evidence, and while outside experts and the defence point to the many glaring security anomalies raised by the case, Mr Munden was found guilty and is awaiting sentence.

"It's nice to see Hetherington still wearing the old school tie"

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

MURKEYSIDE

WITH council rents set to rise to £30-a-week on average, corporation tenants were understandably irritated to learn that some properties owned by Liverpool city council have been let for as much as 20p.

These peppercorn properties are not high-rise flats on rundown estates but prime site accommodation in leafy suburbs with names like Beechley Cottage and Childwall Lodge. Furthermore, they just happen to be rented out to... senior staff on the city council.

Anita Jones, who worked as PA to the director of environmental services, rents hers for the princely sum of 20p. The rent on her family home has not been revised since 1934.

Senior environmental services manager George Hibble (salary £26,000) pays only £9.23 for his pad and claims that even that is too much. When asked why he didn't inform his cash-strapped employers that he'd been enjoying a cheap rent six times below the market rate, officer Hibble admitted: "I didn't let on because I was on to a winner."

All 39 homes involved are rented by current or former council staff and are owned by the environmental services department. Whenever a house became vacant it was advertised internally to officers at the department's Mansion House (sic) HQ. Officers even sold their own homes to join in the scam of dirt-cheap rents for council bosses.

However, Liverpool council is set to end this happy situation by raising the rents by 1,000 percent. But never mind: the tenants will henceforth exercise their "right to buy" under Tory housing legislation — an action which could make Westminster city councillors blush in awe.

Liverpool's chief executive, Peter Bounds, is conducting a top-level inquiry into the shameful affair. Bounds himself prefers to buy rather than rent, and was given a £125,000 loan by the council to help purchase his Woolton Village home.

The sorry episode has even been referred to the Merseyside fraud squad. And Liverpool council will doubtless pursue the matter with the same determination it has adopted towards poll tax defaulters. Last November, 22-year-old Samantha Evans was jailed for failing to pay £500 poll tax arrears — being eight months pregnant was no excuse. She failed to realise that the sum in question amounted to nearly 50 years rent for some of the city's most favoured council tenants.

TORBAY

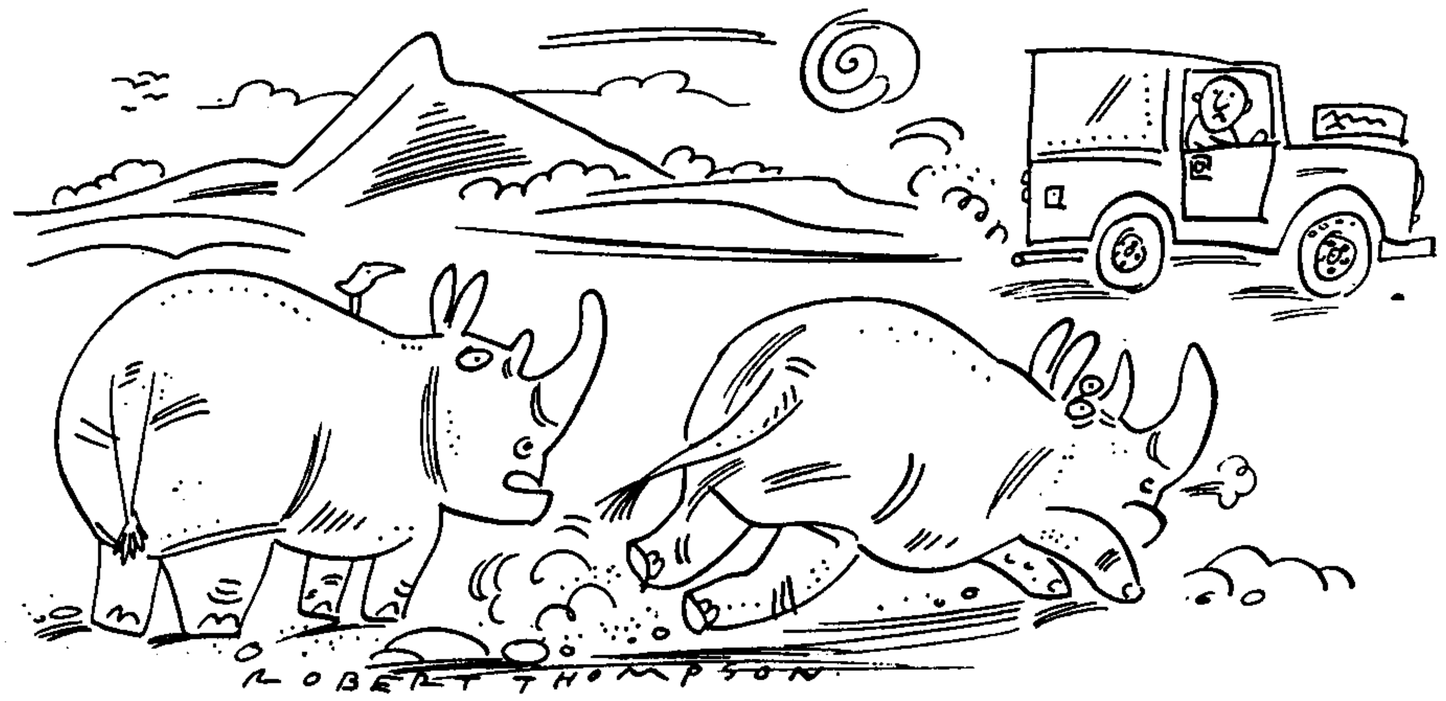
VISITORS to the so-called English Riviera have had their view of Torquay harbour marred for the last three years by a rusting hulk called The Woolacombe.

Under arrest for non-payment of harbour dues and owing £35,000 to local repairers, the ship would normally have been dragged out to sea by now. But Torbay council officers have given her special treatment, including free electricity from the quayside. Why? Certainly not because one of their erstwhile colleagues is part-owner of the ship.

John Weston, marine superintendent of Torbay council until his sudden resignation last year, is the subject of a fraud squad investigation which is also looking into allegations that he teamed up with the company that won a £250,000 council contract to renew yacht moorings in Brixham. The moorings broke loose and caused a dozen boats to run adrift in the harbour.

Weston says he did nothing without the consent and knowledge of his superiors — a view shared by Peter Noone, the whistle-blowing internal auditor who was sacked last year for revealing that Torbay council had failed to keep proper accounts for hundreds of thousands of pounds of dubious outside contracts.

Noone showed that, at the very least, senior officers in the treasury and town clerk's department suppressed public disclosure of their incompetence. Noone won his unfair dismissal claim but failed to get his job back.



"No, Harvey! Think of your no claims bonus"

MANCHESTER

AS PREDICTED in the *Eye*, Manchester's much-maligned eco festival, Global '94, has been scrapped following the resignation of the non-event's chief executive, Warren "Chip" Lindner.

But why has the much-hyped environment-saving carnival, which was meant to attract 200,000 visitors to Manchester, been consigned to the dustbin? As the *Eye* explained last year, Global Forum was a ruse, perpetrated by the Labour-controlled city council, to court Third World votes for Manchester's 2000 Olympic games bid.

After Manchester's bid lost to Sydney's, councillors and other organisers pulled the plug, neglecting to raise sponsorship and sacking from the organising committee a group of respected eco buffs.

Although the festival is off, a couple of hundred bureaucrats will be flown in for a weekend mini-conference in the summer, which is being organised by Lindner's deputy, smooth-talking Ulsterman Sir Gil Thompson.

Thompson was until recently chief executive of Manchester Airport (Global Forum's main sponsor) whose concern for the environment extends to concreting over large swathes of it. Funnily enough his appointment coincides with the airport's announcement of a campaign to win support to build a third runway and increase its status as the world's 17th most-used flight venue. When the conference takes place Thompson will be feted in the local press as the man who saved Global Forum from complete collapse, just as the airport starts to lobby MPs and locals to support its third runway claims.

TOWER HAMLETS

DISGRACED ruling Liberals in Tower Hamlets are so desperate they are having to "borrow" candidates from other parties to stand in May's council elections.

Less than a year ago, Josie Harriott, the Liberal candidate for St Catherine's ward in Wapping, was in the Labour party, and at the previous elections nearly won the Labour nomination for Shadwell.

Two other Liberal hopefuls, Rofique Ullah and Sayeed Mural Islam, are even more interesting: both were sacked from the council last year for gross misconduct.

The elections will be fraught and close-run. The racist British National Party won the Millwall by-election last year by only seven votes, since when the Liberals' head office has been conducting a well-publicised inquiry, courtesy of Lord Lester, into allegations that local party members "pandered" to racism to win the dodgy right-wing vote.

Lord Lester's report made no mention of evidence which claimed that on polling day a Bangladeshi Liberal activist, determined to keep out the likely Labour winner, had been telling fellow Bangladeshis that if they couldn't vote for a "white" party (the Liberals) they could always vote BNP — which was said to stand for the Bangladeshi National Party.

ORKNEY

IT'S BEEN a bad week (*Shurely "decade"? Ed.*) for Orkney Island council (OIC) — but recent events have had council officials reaching for the Prozac.

First, the families whose children were snatched from their beds in February 1991 announced, within only a few days of the legal three-year deadline, that they are to seek compensation for the actions of OIC's social workers. Twenty writs have been issued on behalf of parents, children and grandparents.

A sum not unadjacent to £2 million has been mentioned — about one third of the cost of Lord Clyde's inquiry, which wasn't allowed to ask about anything relevant, such as: where was the evidence that provoked the snatches? This was lucky as there wasn't any.

The writs might have been issued earlier but matters were delayed when OIC objected to the granting of legal aid to the families. The official response from OIC has, of course, been "no comment". But this did not stop councillor Howie Firth from saying his piece. He suggested that the families might like to drop their actions because of the damage that might be done to the tourist industry. There is no record of Howie, or anyone else connected with OIC, making such a suggestion to social workers three years ago. In any event the families have sworn instead to "take OIC to the highest court in the land if necessary".

SHEFFIELD

HARD-PRESSED council taxpayers in the failed socialist republic of Sheffield are celebrating the Labour-controlled council's failed bid to host the 2002 Commonwealth games.

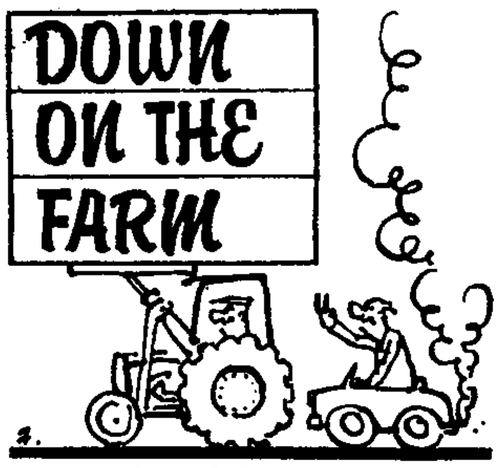
Knowing that locals would be horrified to be put in the firing line once again (cf the world student games fiasco, etc), the council came up with a devious idea. It conned the local university into fronting the bid — but clean forgot to say that all potential host cities were required to indemnify the Commonwealth Games Council for England against potential loss. The council also ignored a report which suggested that the event could lose £15 million.

However, on the day of the vote for the British nomination Sheffield asked if it could be spared signing the indemnity. When this was refused the city ignominiously pulled its bid — to the hilarity of everyone outside South Yorkshire.

ASBESTOS NEWS

THE local authority pension fund in West Yorkshire that invests in T&N, the giant asbestos company (see *Eyes passim*), has some strange bedfellows.

T&N has been accused of damaging the health of workers and residents through asbestos contamination. So anti-asbestos campaigners were surprised that the list of T&N shareholders includes: South West Thames regional health authority; Lanarkshire health board; Manchester central hospitals and community care NHS trust; East Gloucestershire NHS trust, and the South West Surrey health authority.



FREE-marketeer Nicholas Soames, the minister for overeating, seems more than usually enthusiastic about the genetically engineered milk booster bovine somatropin (BST).

At a recent parliamentary meeting, he cast loving eyes at chemical representatives as he spoke, pointing out the wonderful growth in employment which would flow from production of this drug in the UK.

BST is, of course, the product which multinational pharmaceutical giants Eli Lilly and Monsanto want to foist on dairy farmers, urging them to inject cows to boost milk yield (and drug company profits) and add to European overproduction. Despite Fatty Soames's enthusiasm, BST is far from safe, causing known and well documented ill health in the bovines unfortunate enough to be treated.

It also produces a 360 percent increase in insulin growth hormone in milk, which in experiments caused increased bone length in rats and excessive growth in cows. Some commentators consider mainlining cows on this new drug — which has no therapeutic benefit — is like forcing them to drive with the choke out. But the ebullient Soames will have none of this. As the product is licensed in the US, he claims it is an acceptable product, disregarding the reaction of schools in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and consumers in Canada, who have refused to accept milk from BST-treated cows.

Another reason might be Soames' enthusiasm for Roche Products, the drug company with major interests in genetic engineering. It is anxious to see BST succeed, paving the way for its own clutch of gene alerted products.

But the worst of it is that, under the GATT agreement, because the US has licensed the product under very dubious circumstances, the multinational drug companies may be able to force the EC to abandon its current moratorium preventing farmers dosing our milk with unwanted hormones. When our children are force-fed with this milk, Soames may yet get his growth, even it isn't quite what he is expecting.

WHILE Soames argues that because one country accepts a product, it should be accepted here, this dictum does not apply to the small but economically valuable band of British courgette growers. Plagued by a devastating virus which can wipe out the whole crop in a single season, they have sought relief in a vaccine based on the offending virus.

Soames's money-spinning pesticide safety division — never slow to see an opportunity to rip-off small businesses — is classifying the vaccine as a pesticide. As such, it is proposing to charge £13,000 for safety testing, a figure out of all proportion to projected sales.

British growers will be unable to use this valuable protection, leaving French growers free to take over the UK market. The French have long allowed the use of the vaccine, and the corpulent Soames will ensure that Britons will only be able to eat the imported version.

Not that Soames has restricted his lunatic ministry (aka the Maffia) to screwing the courgette industry. Its latest indignity to be visited on sheep farmers is to penalise even the most petty of mistakes in quota transfer applications. One northern hill farmer, who bought quota rights for 325 animals, has had his sheep premium subsidy withdrawn because sharp-eyed mad officials have discovered the vendor only had 324 to sell.

This slip has cost the farmer £15,000 in EC-funded subsidy, leaving Ken Pearce, the National Farmers' Union's northern region policy adviser to claim that he was sure "the EC did not intend to penalise minor errors made in transfers". Minor or not, the Maffia, which can make cock-ups like wasting £1.2 million on the central veterinary laboratory's computer system (Eye 840), is in no mood to forgive this farmer — nor an estimated 100 more who are suffering severe hardship as a result of this stringent policy.

If these farmers go out of business, as Mr Pearce fears they will, it will leave more money in the Euro-kitty to give French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Irish farmers. These are undoubtedly more deserving than parasitic NFU members who are stupid enough to want to produce food in the UK. Mr Soames's Maffia should be congratulated for its even-handed approach to promoting European prosperity.

POLICE 5

MR PAUL TAYLOR, leader of something called the Exodus Rave Collective, has caused Inspector Knacker of Bedfordshire some embarrassment.

The inspector claimed that Mr Taylor had been found with £1,400 worth of ecstasy at his bungalow in Chalton — but Mr Taylor counterclaimed that Knacker had planted the drugs as part of a clampdown on the rave scene.

A "timed" police photograph was taken of the purse containing the drugs at 9.30 and was shown to the jury. But the detective constable involved admitted under cross-examination that according to his notebook he had entered Mr Taylor's house at 9.28 that evening. This remarkably swift location of the drugs did not fool the jury and Mr Taylor was cleared.

PRISON NEWS

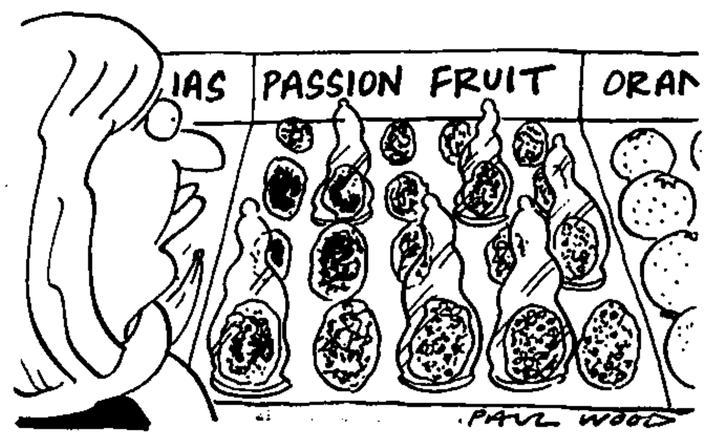
SO MUCH for privatised jails: the American owners of Blakenhurst prison in Worcestershire have been forced to beg for help from their hated foe, the prison service.

Blakenhurst's unqualified staff, mostly recruited from JobCentres, have been unable to contain a series of riots. Inmates staged one because they disliked the way their chicken had been cooked, and another flared when they got new potatoes instead of chips for supper.

The prison hospital, meanwhile, is staffed by evangelical Christians who are denying methadone to the prison's many registered heroin addicts. The result? A flourishing drug dealing network with addicts forced into prostitution to get their fix.

The violence has been so bad that after the last outbreak Blakenhurst's bosses went on bended knees to the governor of Winson Green prison in nearby Birmingham hoping to offload the inmates that Blakenhurst cannot control.

Elsewhere, Blakenhurst's owners, the sinisterly-named Corrections Corporation of America, is again the subject of mismanagement allegations over its US institutions.



ENERGY NEWS

THE LEGAL fight to stop the Thorp plutonium factory at Sellafield was defeated in the high court last Friday by Mr Justice Potts. He made the astonishing statement that he was not presiding over a court of appeal against decisions by the government.

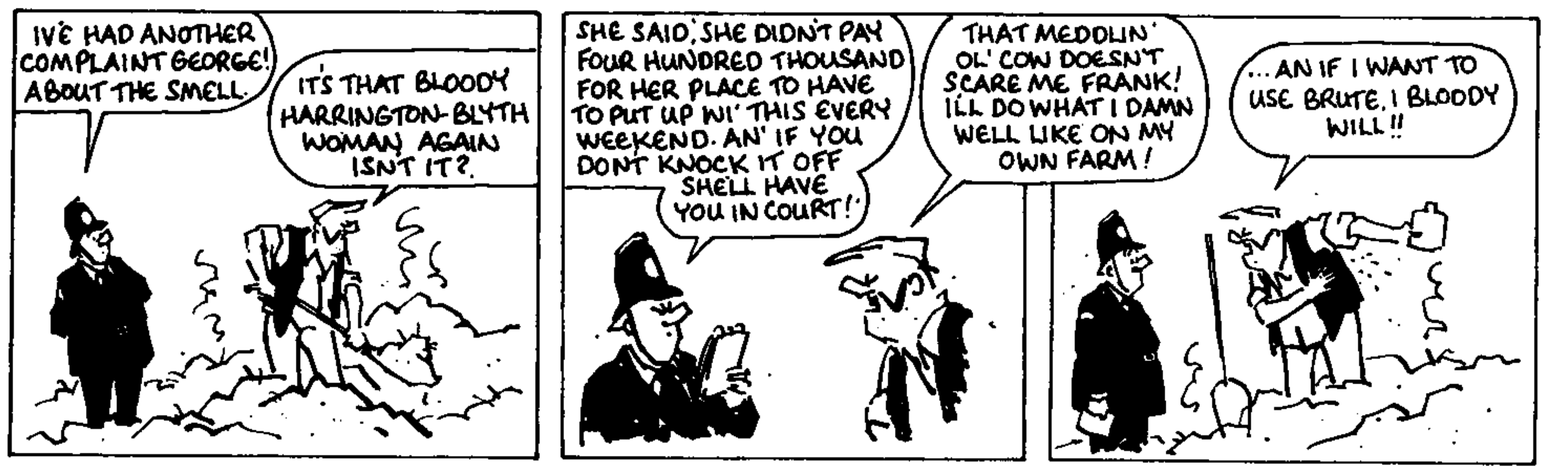
This could be seen as a snide criticism by a judge of the second division, of the activity of his superior, Lord Justice Scott, a lord justice of appeal, who is doing just that over the Matrix Churchill case. It might also raise the question of what a judicial review is for — and why the high court decided to stage one over Thorp — if that is not its function.

Potts accepted British Nuclear Fuel's arguments, including the decision to keep secret the Touche Ross report on its financial situation, as well as the government's claim that there was no need for a public inquiry because objectors had been invited to write in and civil servants had read their letters (and then kept them secret).

But he did say the government had broken the law in failing to "justify" Thorp — that is, to weigh the net benefit against the net detriment in releasing more radiation on the public. However, this did not warrant refusal of permission to operate the plant. Greenpeace sees this as an important ruling for the future. But for the government one more exposure of its arrogant attitude to the law will cause no sleepless nights.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


IV'E HAD ANOTHER COMPLAINT GEORGE! ABOUT THE SMELL.
IT'S THAT BLOODY HARRINGTON-BLYTH WOMAN AGAIN ISN'T IT?.
SHE SAID, SHE DIDN'T PAY FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND FOR HER PLACE TO HAVE TO PUT UP WI' THIS EVERY WEEKEND. AN' IF YOU DON'T KNOCK IT OFF SHELL HAVE YOU IN COURT!'
THAT MEDDLIN' OL' COW DOESN'T SCARE ME FRANK! I'LL DO WHAT I DAMN WELL LIKE ON MY OWN FARM!
... AN IF I WANT TO USE BRUTE, I BLOODY WILL!!

JOBS FOR THE BOYS

BUREAUCRATS at the Black Country Development Corporation (BCDC) have proved their competence again — by forcing one of the region's most successful firms to close.

UK Car Auctions shut with the loss of dozens of jobs because the BCDC reneged on a promise to sell land the company needed to stay in business.

The BCDC, of course, was set up to boost jobs in one of Britain's most deprived areas. Unemployment has risen by 50 percent since it started "work". Meanwhile, its directors have spent millions giving each other's firms lucrative contracts.

UK Car Auctions was one of the region's biggest vehicle auction firms with millions invested on the back of the BCDC's promise to sell it an adjacent derelict two-acre site. Without the extra land it could not compete with what other firms offered its landlords, the rapacious Richardson brothers. The BCDC held on to its land in the hope of cashing in on the Richardson deal and recouping some of the £25 million it has lost on foolish land purchases elsewhere.

A local firm built up over 10 years has now disappeared, probably to be replaced by a huge retail store which will siphon yet more profits out of the region...

Letters

Rocket Man

Sir,

I was amused to read the letter from Richard Unwin (RJR Unwin) "Pyrotechnical Fault" (25 February 1994). As chairman of Astra Holdings plc I bought Richard's company for Astra in October 1986. We certainly did not buy it for its activities in the special effects or fireworks fields.

We bought it for its contacts with certain Third World countries in Africa, the Middle and Far East. Mr Unwin's managing director John Sellens (a very good man) had come from Thorn EMI where he was responsible for selling the Cymbeline artillery locating system to Iraq.

John Sellens was one of the most regular travellers to Iraq and at the Baghdad Military Fair [28 April to 2 May 1989) where we were represented along with such stalwarts as BAe Royal Ordnance, GEC Avionics, Graviner (William Holdings subsidiary), GEC Avionics [sic], Matrix Churchill, Racal, Thorn EMI, United Scientific Holdings etc, the Iraqi chief of staff came on our stand and asked "Where is my good friend John Sellens?" I would also take issue with the other matters mentioned re the Thatchers and Nigeria.

I am glad Richard does not take issue with the other matters — ie the Malaysian arms deal, Stephanus Adolphus Kock, Dick Evans, British Aerospace etc. BAe is the prime contractor in Malaysia as it is in Al Yamamah. Kock has been reported as the Malaysian dam fixer and as playing a key role in the supergun affair in the national press. Unwin was a £75,000 pa consultant to Astra and Kock a main board director. Unwin was also a consultant to Trafalgar House and also involved in Malaysia and an Oman deal. Kock has also been reported as an adviser to JIC.

As a result of my investigations into Kock, Unwin and many other matters resulting from information from all quarters including the late Gerald Bull, Astra was smashed up and many of my files stolen by the MoD police. In contrast to the saving of 40 jobs at Paines Wessex' old Dartford factory, Astra has lost 4,000 jobs, several of my former colleagues were falsely arrested, one was framed up and imprisoned, Bull and others have been murdered and most former directors smeared by a £2.2 million ridiculous DTI report.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD JAMES,
London SW13.

Suitable case for treatment

Sir,

Thank you for publishing some of the evidence "tantamount to manslaughter" concerning the BMJ study into Fazakerley Hospital, Liverpool (EYE *840). Your readers may be interested to know Merseyside Police have decided not to even investigate! Apparently the logic is that if I can name a specific nurse and patient they can investigate, but if statistics show it has probably happened on a large scale they can't. I intend to complain to the Home Office and the DPP. If an investigation is "forced" the police will be keen not to find any evidence, as that would show up the incompetence of the initial decision.*

Yours sincerely,
KENNETH MCDONALD,
Edge Hill, Liverpool.

More glee vicar?

Sir,

As an impoverished vicar myself, I was greatly cheered up by the ARHSB service for getting money from parishioners. It provided a good laugh in the midst of a miserable situation.

Incidentally, why don't you publish an ARHSB next Xmas? A compilation of the various liturgies you have written over the years would be an invaluable addition to any churchperson's bookshelf!

Yours,
NICK PARISH,
London SW17.

O·B·N·K

There is a very special quality in John Major which stands in opposition to everything that modern politics is supposed to be about. Where others deal in public displays of rhetoric, John Major is at his best behind the scenes, stitching together complex deals and negotiating to a detailed brief. He rose to his present position because he possesses a fine mind which he uses with almost uncanny precision.

STEWART STEVEN
Evening Standard

Submitted by APR.

£10 paid for all submissions put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Glassless society

Sir,

You mention a "reception" to launch a publication from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on the community charge to which Sir Christopher Foster has been invited (EYE, *11 February). You think this event is due to take place on 14 March 1994 and will involve lots of free drinks for MPs.*

This meeting took place on 14 March three years ago, back in 1991! Sir Christopher was, indeed, present. The meeting was held at Church House, close to Parliament. But, as on all occasions of this kind, we did not serve the MPs — or anyone else — with any alcohol. Nevertheless, suggestions for replacing the community charge with a new system seemed to go down very well.

RICHARD BEST,
Director, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Lookalike

Watts

Sainsbury

Sir,

Has anyone else noticed the extraordinary resemblance between Sainsbury's Lord Sainsbury and Coronation Street's Curly Watts? I wonder if by any chance they are related.

Yours faithfully,
PETER MUNDAY,
Richmond, Surrey.

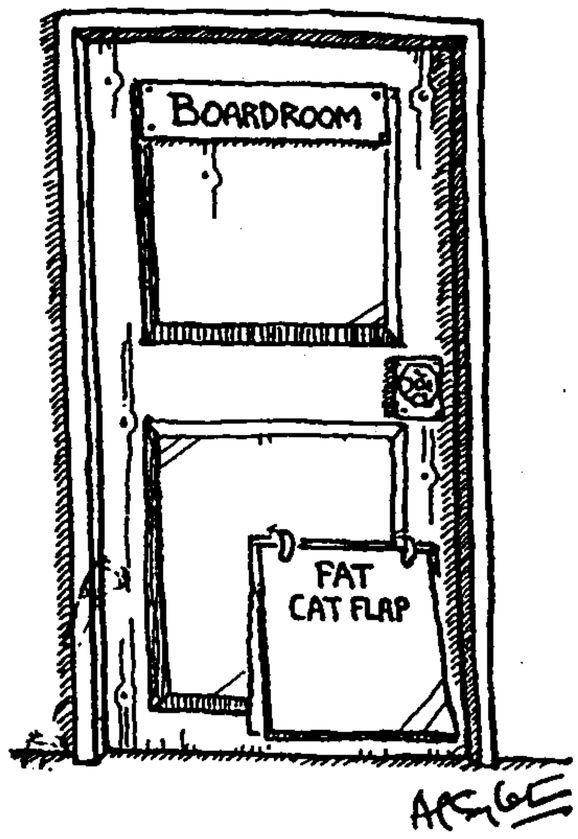
LUVVIES

I wanted to create an artistic vacuum to see what would be sucked into it. I am still engaged in that process.

JEREMY IRONS
(on his sabbatical)
Mail on Sunday

Submitted by P. Thompson.

An occasional column devoted to the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.



Optical allusions

Sir,

I am sorry to spoil the point of your Eyeful about our "cataract free zone" (Doing the Rounds, 25 February) but I fear your vision of the facts is blurred and your conclusions cross-eyed.

Soon after Christmas we did indeed resolve to eliminate as far as possible the number of our patients awaiting cataract operations and the local NHS hospital could carry out only 100 of them. Being a far-sighted commisson we have developed connections with other suitable providers so we invited them to offer their services on this occasion. What an eye-opener! The average prices offered — including travel costs where necessary — were below, not above, the price agreed with the local NHS hospital. Incidentally, one of the hospitals to offer its services (at a lower cost) was the local private one where the operations will be carried out by the sole island ophthalmic surgeon whom you cited.

Yours sincerely,
PETER REEVES,
Director of finance and contracting, IoW Health Commission.

Bumf

Sir,

Your disgraceful attack on THIS ENGLAND *quarterly magazine deserves contempt.*

This publication is read and loved by many millions of people throughout the world and has as its editor a man of quality and patriotism. The readership is growing all the time, particularly among Britain's young people who are increasingly waking up to the dangers of European unification and political-correctness.

Since my articles began appearing in THIS ENGLAND *every liberal-left hack has been firing lies and abuse, their aim being to silence the journal. And ever since* THIS ENGLAND *raised the red, white and blue banner of anti-federalism the establishment has been seething and plotting to destroy it. It seems that in today's cray world "Gerry" Adams and his IRA friends are granted more freedom of speech than* THIS ENGLAND*!*

Perhaps if PRIVATE EYE *would like to quadruple its circulation overnight it should follow* TE*'s example and take on a column written by me. You might then be able to afford to print on art paper rather than toilet paper.*

Yours faithfully,
STUART MILLSON,
London WC1.

Out of tune

Sir,

Classic FM has been known to play the fourth movement of Tchaikovsky's Pathetique symphony (Media News, issue 840), albeit not immediately after the first three. They did so on the evening of 29 December, at the conclusion of which the announcer attributed it to — Mendelssohn!

Yours faithfully,
A.R. GALLAGHER,
London NW9.

I-SPY *Niagara Falls*

Submitted by Joan & Alan Gardner. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Thoroughly nice Chappell

Sir,

I was surprised and distressed to see the photograph of my old friend Philip Chappell prominently displayed under the heading of your article, Swindlers List, in your edition No 840 of Friday 25th February.

I am writing this letter because Philip Chappell died last May and therefore cannot come to his own defence. The only reference to him in the article is in the third paragraph where you describe him correctly as a prominent campaigner for free pensions. That being all you have to say about him it is unfair that you should show a photograph of this exceptionally scrupulous and honourable man under that odious heading.

The point which Philip Chappell campaiged about especially was the unfairness to pension fund contributors which was inherent in their being locked into contributory schemes on unfavourable terms when they changed their jobs. He saw this as a serious restraint on people's freedom to move from one employment to another. The new private pension schemes may not have covered themselves in glory but the ordinary contributor has not always received a fair deal in company schemes as you well know, and I am not only thinking of Maxwell.

I may not have explained Chappell's position to you very well as I am no expert on pensions, but I knew him as one of the most upright men in the City (he resigned from Morgan Grenfell many months before the scandalous events of 1987 by which he was deeply shocked), and I do not believe that he should be associated by any implication with the mis-selling of private pension plans with which your article is quite rightly concerned.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN PORTEOUS,
London W11.

Tall order

Sir,

I know not what Edwina Currie thought of your 25 February cover, but to me it was tasteless. By the way it was also most offensive. Keep it up. (Geddit?).

Yours faithfully,
DAVID TALL,
Yelverton, Devon.

PR weak

Sir,

Thrilled as I am to see my ten year-old organ highlighted alongside Bernard Levin's 200 year-old one in PSEUDS CORNER *("The end of apartheid is opening up South Africa for full scale PR development," 25 February), I am also slightly puzzled. After all, what does your contributor expect us to write about in* PR WEEK, *if not PR? I only ask.*

Speaking of PR, I couldn't help noticing in the same EYE *the "alarming new fact" you reveal about Charles Barker Ltd, the collapsed PR subsidiary of the equally defunct Corporate Communcations: "The Eye can reveal that one of the creditors was the British taxpayer — via HMSO, the government's stationery office" (25 February). This bears an amazing resemblance to the alarming new fact revealed in* PR WEEK *two weeks previously: "The Government was a Corporate Communications creditor — Charles Barker owed HMSO Books £1,704 at the time of the collapse" (10 February). Are they by some chance related?*

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN FARISH,
Editor, PR Week.

● *ON 28 JANUARY 1994 we ran a letter from Richard S. Courtney referring to an article in the Eye about Doug Bulmer, BACM president. Unfortunately, a typesetting error made a nonsense of one of the points Mr Courtney was making. What he actually wrote was: "You assert that Doug Bulmer is unique in being provided with time by his employer to fulfil his duties as a trades union presdient. This is not true." But this appeared without the words "unique in", changing Mr Courtney's meaning, and we apologise for the error.*

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"And he's got the icepack on his groin there, so possibly not the old shoulder injury…"

RAY FRENCH, BBC1
(Vincent Sinclair)

"… Mayock may have been making the wrong mistakes tactically in the past."

STEVE OVETT, ITV
(Tony Brady)

Gary Davis: *What have you done this weekend?*

Caller: *I went out for a meal last night with Suzanne, my girlfriend."*

Gary Davis: *So is Suzanne your girlfriend?*

VIRGIN 1215
(D.A. Foster)

"He [Ron Atkinson] describes him [Sean Teale] as John Wayne — the man who comes over the hill to save the cavalry."

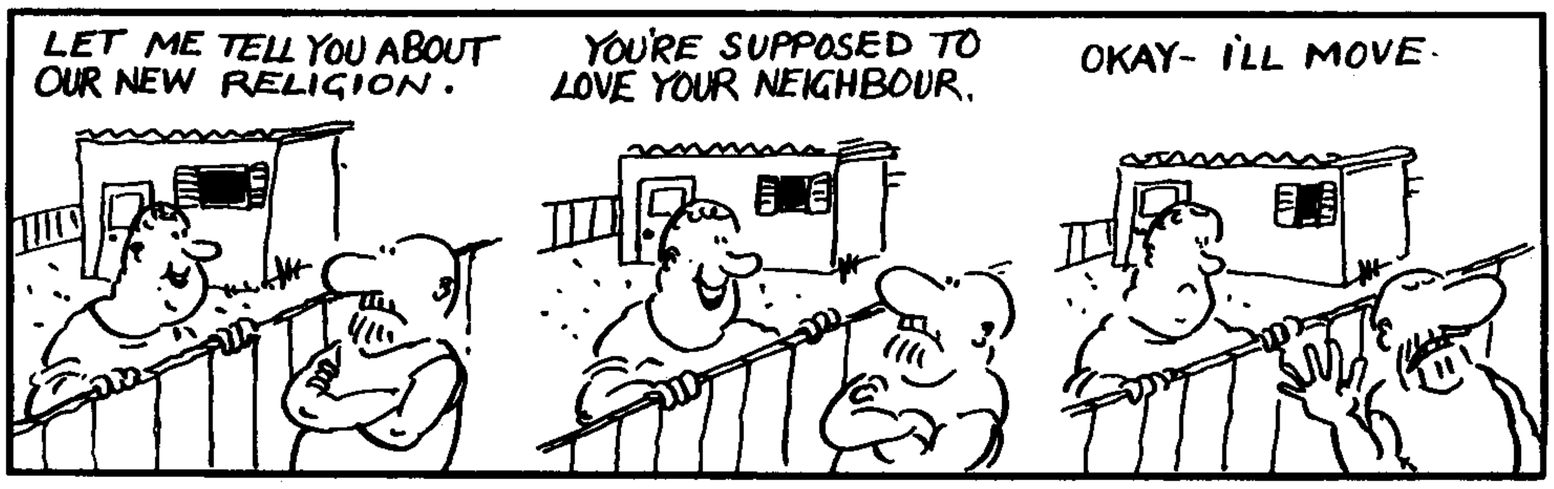
ALAN PARRY, BBC
(Paul Spart)

"Bringing up children on your own is very difficult, even when there are two parents."

VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY, Radio 4
(J. Hockenhull)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Letter from **Central America**

from Our Own Correspondent

A FORMER human rights monitor posing as a strong-arm president… an army that describes peace as war by other means… referenda that attract fewer than 15 percent of the electorate… Guatemala will surely be Banana Republic of the Year in 1994.

The most recent problems started in May last year when born-again president Jorge Serrano, taking a leaf from the South American dictators' handbook, attempted a palace coup. Alarmed by the threat of impeachment proceedings on corruption charges, he tried to dissolve congress and rule by decree.

That privilege is reserved for the army, which promptly put Serrano on a plane and sent him into exile with less-forgiving colleagues in neighbouring El Salvador. The generals, keen to buff up their PR image — at least as far as it affects foreign aid flows — found the ideal substitute: the country's human rights ombudsman and their main critic, Ramiro de León Carpio.

It is amazing how different things appear when seen through the smoked-glass windows of the icing-cake national palace. The same country that El Señor Presidente once denounced as one of the worst human rights abusers in the world, is now, we are told, making "steady progress". Shame about the figures which show a doubling of kidnappings and killings in 1993 — the surge coming in the last six months of the year when Carpio León was holding the reins.

Control, of course, is a loose concept here. Unseen for days, last month the president took a highly publicised stroll to allay fears that he was under virtual house arrest in the palace or had even been overthrown in a coup. The photo opportunity stretched to a five-minute shoeshine in the park, El Presidente symbolically enclosed in a human cage of military bodyguards. Coup rumours have only strengthened since.

All of which is bad news for the "Goodbye Brenda, Goodbye Belize" tour that has just taken place in the former British colony next door. Just weeks before last May's coup, the UK foreign office decided — with its usual impeccable timing — to withdraw the 1,350-strong British garrison from Belize as its contribution to defence cuts. Guatemala, it was reasoned, was now a stable country which had dropped its longstanding territorial claim to its defenceless neighbour.

It isn't and it hasn't, of course, although one of Serrano's last acts before his overthrow was to try to delete Guatemala's 140-year claim from the constitution. There was an outcry and his military minders reminded him that his own constitution obliged him to hold a referendum before he could do any such thing.

The referendum was a problem, however. The political system is so discredited after so much military meddling that no one votes in Guatemala any more. Fewer than 15 percent turned out in the last referendum.

At that rate the Guatemalan military could win any vote on Belize simply by ordering 45,000 regular troops and 600,000 militiamen to the polls to vote for Belizean annexation. At the very least, Belize's empty, soon-to-be unpatrolled spaces look good for an expansion of the Guat generals' thriving poppy and marijuana plantations.

It all sounds horribly reminiscent of sending the "wrong signals" to the Argies in the run-up to the Falklands. Unable to send a gunboat or even an Antarctic survey vessel (cut too), Whitehall sent Britannia and Queen Elizabeth late last month to assure worried Belizeans of a "special relationship" and "continued commitment".

The locals were having none of it. While Brenda was here, the press discovered that British squaddies would be taking the airport's radar with them. "MoD property, apparently," noted one Belizean hack. "So we won't even know when the Guats have landed…"

FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "What is all this fuss? It is a beautiful name for a baby," Yasuhiro Tanoka told reporters gathered outside the Tokyo Family Court. "This country is ruled by fascists. I intend to appeal."

Tanoka was speaking about the Akishima municipal government's objection to his choice of name for his son. "The name — *Little Flower Plucked From Hairy Bottom* — came to me in a dream, so I went to the town hall to enter it in the family register. At first the official wrote it down but, after consulting with a superior, he came back, crossed it out, and said that it was rude and if I didn't choose a name that conformed to social norms he'd call the police."

Tanoka took his case to the Tokyo Family Court, who initially ruled in his favour. "They said I'd abused my naming rights but, since the name had been written in the register, it shouldn't have been crossed out again. When the municipal government still refused to register the name, I offered to change it to Akuma (*Devil Child*) instead, so as not to cause offence, but they threw me out of the building and appealed to the Family Court, who now say I have to call him something else. So that's what I'm going to call him — *Something Else*. That will teach them. I shall not be mocked." *(Daily Yomiuri, 16/2/94. Spotter — Simon Verlaque)*

—●—

● "I know things probably look bad for me," Joel Okitel told officers from the Kampala police force, as they arrested him on a charge of manslaughter. "But when you have heard the full story, I am sure that you will let me walk free."

Okitel explained the circumstances that had led to the killing at his house in Mornita village in Nyero, Kumi district. "For some years, it has been my practice to keep 100,000 shillings in banknotes in a sock inside my pillow, but yesterday I found the bundle was gone. My underpants were also missing, and I suspected that my wife, Mary Asio, who is a slut, had given them to a witch doctor to make me impotent and had stolen the money to pay him. When I accused her, she denied everything and attempted to bite off my genitals. I shouted 'slut, slut!' and lashed out at her with a stick. This upset a millet steamer which, unfortunately, toppled over, killing our six-month-old baby instantly. Next day, while digging the baby's grave, I found the money and underpants, along with some socks and my wife's half-petty and brassieres, all hidden in a rat's nest. The rat was clearly a criminal so I killed it, Mary roasted it, and we both feasted. I tell you, I am innocent." *(New Vision [Kampala], 28/1/94. Spotter — Will Palin)*

—●—

● *"Alright, I know Christians are supposed to turn the other cheek, but no way. I'm Hanger by name and Hanger by nature. Give me the rope and I'll string her up myself."*

Sister Marie Hanger, an education coordinator for the Catholic Church, lashed out at Susan Butler, publisher of the Macquarie Thesaurus, during Melbourne TV's 'Right to Gripe'. "This book is a reflection of our sick society," she screamed, "full of vile similes including 'as dry as a nun's cunt' and 'as cold as a nun's tits'. Just what sort of language is that?" The programme was taken off air before Ms Butler could answer.

In a statement released the next day to the press,

Ms Butler said: "It is not a dictionary's role to act as language police, or to stop people from using offensive words. The nun was quoting from our book, so at least she found it useful. We've had no letters from the gay community objecting to expressions like 'fudge-packers' or 'turd burglars'. Anyway, she's no Missy Innocent herself. Before the show started, one of the cameramen broke wind and she shouted out 'Who cut the cheese?' That expression, incidentally, appears on page 436 of the thesaurus. 22 dollars. Available at all good bookshops." (Australian Times, 26/1/94. Spotter — Charles Stokes)

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

NEW

Hair-Lovers!

As used by Michael Heseltine!

The unique all-in-one reconditioner leaves you looking squeaky-clean and smelling of roses! Whilst all the other fellas look greasy and slimy!

You simply *Whitewash 'n' Go* to Number Ten Downing Street!

MIKE SAYS: This is one thing I'll gladly put my name to!
(Though if it proves embarrassing I'll say I had doubts about it later.)

WHITEWASH 'n' GO

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR

A MOTORWAY CONE

PATRICK WRIGHT '94

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

You'll never guess where I am writing my diary from this week! I am 37,000 feet above the ground in a very big aeroplane, with my new friend Mr Clinton. He has allowed me to fly in his plane and also to be photographed with him, to make up for having allowed Gerry Adams to come to America. Now it is my turn to be on television all the time. For example, today I have been on the following programmes already:

Hi There Ohio

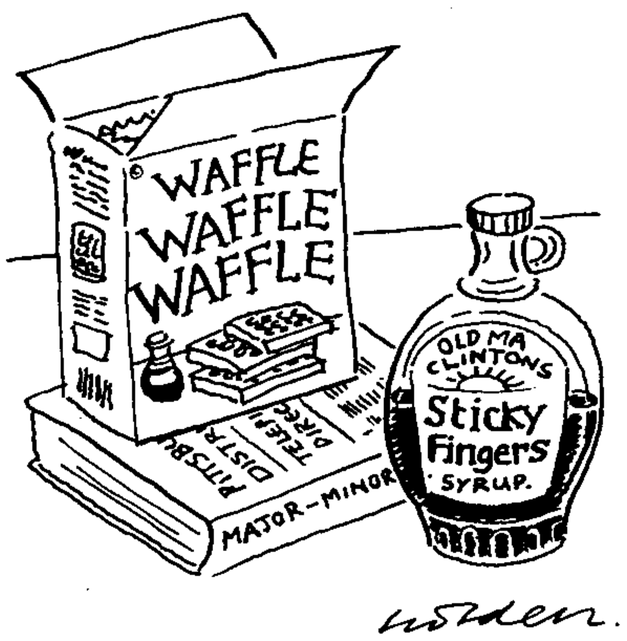
Dallas Drivetime

The Reverend Hiram Greenback's All-Nite Prayerathon

They were all on in the middle of the night, which is when most Americans watch television, according to my new press adviser Mr Meyer. Talking of which, Mr Meyer is a considerably better press adviser than Mr O'Donnell ever was, in my judgement. For instance, he has already discovered that my grandfather was an American, which I did not know. Apparently he was called Abraham Ball-Lincoln.

Tuesday

Today Mr Meyer has arranged for me to go to Pittsburgh, to be photographed looking for my grandfather in the public library. We started with the telephone directory, but there was no one called Ball-Lincoln there. There was however a man called Major Major III living at 4006 Al Capone Drive. I was photographed outside his house, but he came out very angrily asking who I was and threatening to shoot me if I didn't leave immediately. I made a note to tell my brother Terry about this, because it will make an interesting anecdote for his book about our family.



Wednesday

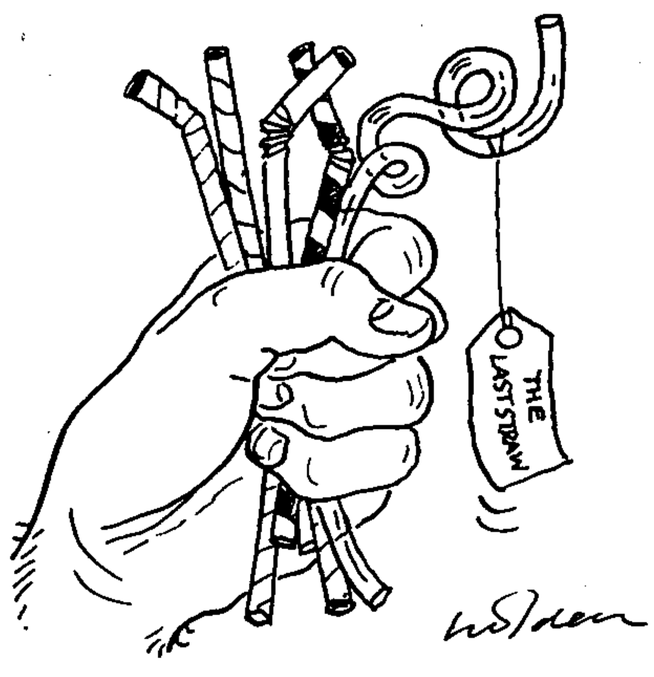
Today I was photographed having breakfast with Mr Clinton at the White House. We had some very nice waffles with maple syrup, and Eggs Over Easy which are like our fried eggs except they have been turned over. Just imagine, my grandfather must have eaten these every morning in his home at Pittsburgh, when he lived there, if he did. Anyway, this was all to show that Mr Clinton and I still have a special relationship, just like the woman I don't mention did with President Reagan. Except that ours is more special, because Mrs Thatcher was never invited to stay at the White House. When Mr Clinton and I were alone, he slapped me on the shoulder and said: "Sure we have a special relationship, John. I think you are a very special asshole." He certainly has a great sense of humour!

Thursday

Today I returned home, to find that, as usual when I go away, the whole country has fallen apart. Things are so bad that they are even saying that Mr Heseltine should be prime minister. This is a very silly idea. Don't they remember that he tried to be prime minister before, and I won? Apparently, Mr Heseltine had done very well at the Scott inquiry, by blaming everyone except himself. What's so clever about that? I did exactly the same thing when I went to the Scott inquiry, and no one said I should be prime minister.

Friday

When I came into this morning's Cabinet meeting Mr Heseltine was by mistake sitting in my chair. He laughed good-naturedly when I pointed this out, as did the rest of the Cabinet, and went back to his usual place. I then announced my new plan about the Scott inquiry, which had been thought up for me by Sir Robin Butler. Sir Robin came in with a number of straws in his hand, and walked over to Sir Nicholas Lyell, who I confess I had never heard of before. Sir Robin said, "Choose a straw, Sir Nicholas. Whoever gets the short one has to take all the blame for Matrix Churchill." Sir Nicholas picked one out and Sir Robin immediately said: "Oh dear, it's you. Well, that's that then. You had better start clearing your desk." I could see that Sir Nicholas was very upset, as he kept asking how long all the other straws were. But Sir Robin told him: "The length of the straws is a matter of national security and it is not in the public interest for you to know." We have now drawn a line under this whole business, and let us hope that this is an end to the whole unnecessary Scott inquiry which I set up.



Saturday

I refuse to be not inconsiderably annoyed by all the papers saying that Mr Heseltine is now prime minister. For a start, Mr Heseltine has told me personally that I have his 100% support until he becomes prime minister. Surely nothing could be plainer than that? I explained this to my wife Norman at breakfast, where she had made some special "waffles sunny side up", which Mrs Clinton had shown her how to do.

I told her that Mr Heseltine could not do my job because he wasn't fit. "That hasn't stopped you," she replied, giving me a funny look and popping a fried egg into my coffee.

"You have missed the point again," I said crossly. "Mr Heseltine might easily have a heart attack."

"So might you when he takes over," she replied.

Sunday

Mr Clinton may not be my friend after all. My press adviser Mr Meyer says Clinton is involved in the Whitewater scandal, which is probably something they drink at breakfast. Anyway, Chris Meyer said to me confidentially: "The mounting evidence of sleaze and corruption makes it very risky to be associated with such a tarnished figure. That is why President Clinton won't talk to you anymore." It is all very confusing.

WORLD OF SOCCER

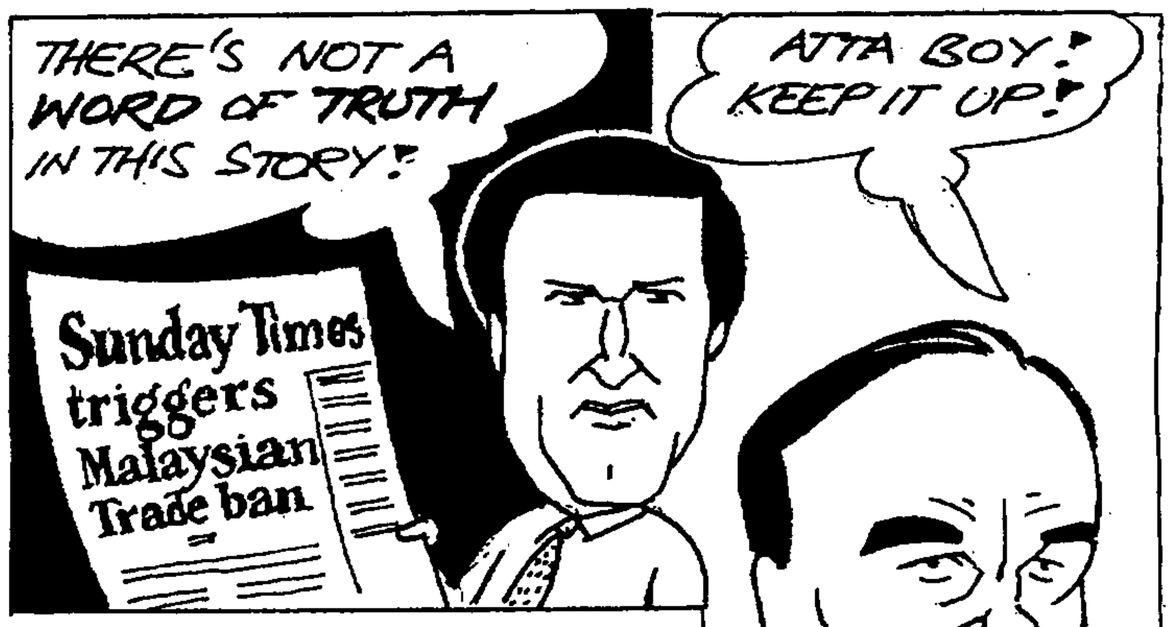
IS HEZZA FIT ENOUGH TO PLAY FOR ENGLAND?

by Our Political Football Staff **E.I. Anthony Bevins**

THE WORLD of Tories was rocked to its foundations yesterday when fears that the 59-year-old superstar Hezza might not be fit enough to lead the English side against the Labour Party.

The injury-prone own-goal specialist had been widely tipped to be the key man in the revised Cabinet squad, but now controversy surrounds his physical health.

Government physiotherapist Sir Bufton Tufton said: "We're not sure if this is a long-term problem. X-rays reveal that Hezza is a compulsive liar and will say anything to get on the park."



HOUSE OF HORROR GIVES UP MORE SECRETS

by Our Bad Taste Staff **Hugh Montgomery Massmurderer**

THE HOUSE at 10 Downing Street is now set to go down in history as the world's most gruesome dwelling.

Last night more bodies were found there, including a number of new skeletons in closets.

Forensic experts working round the clock said: "We may never know just how many political lives have been lost here. We've almost given up counting."

Fred Westminster

Sources close to the investigators believe a Nicholas Lyell may be the next victim to be discovered and inquiries (Scott) are being conducted into a number of other unexplained cases.

Police are now outside No. 10 on a 24-hour basis but the suspect, a Mr J. Major, is laying the blame at the feet of the previous occupant of the house, a Mrs Thatcher.

Those By-Election Candidates in full

(continued from page one).

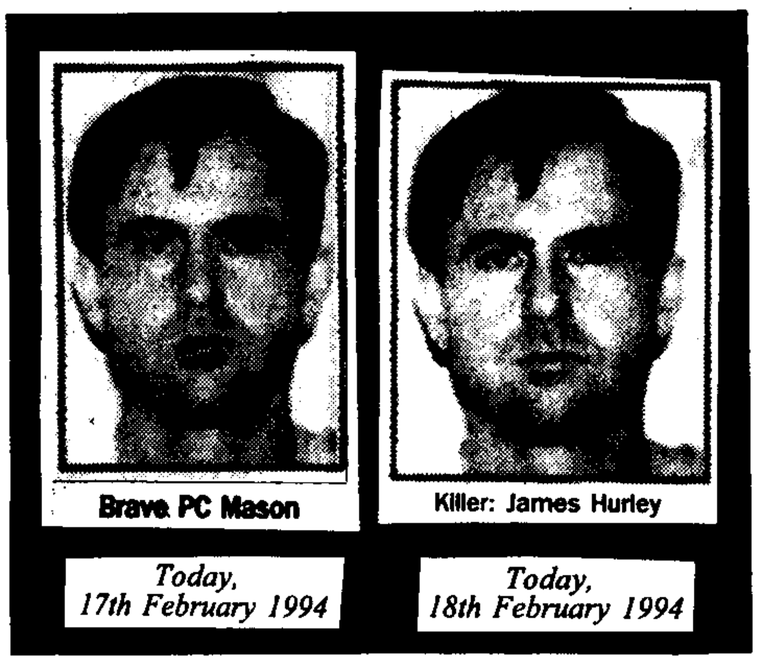
Eastleigh, Southampton

(previous majority: 17,202 Con.)

1. **Hugo Flex** *(Conservative)*
2. **Sir Richard Plasticbag** *(Independent Conservative)*
3. **Brigadier Colin Stockings** *(Monster Raving Conservative)*
4. **Dr Amyl Nitrite** *(Conservative Fatwah Party)*
5. **The Duke of Orange** *(Conservative Unionist)*

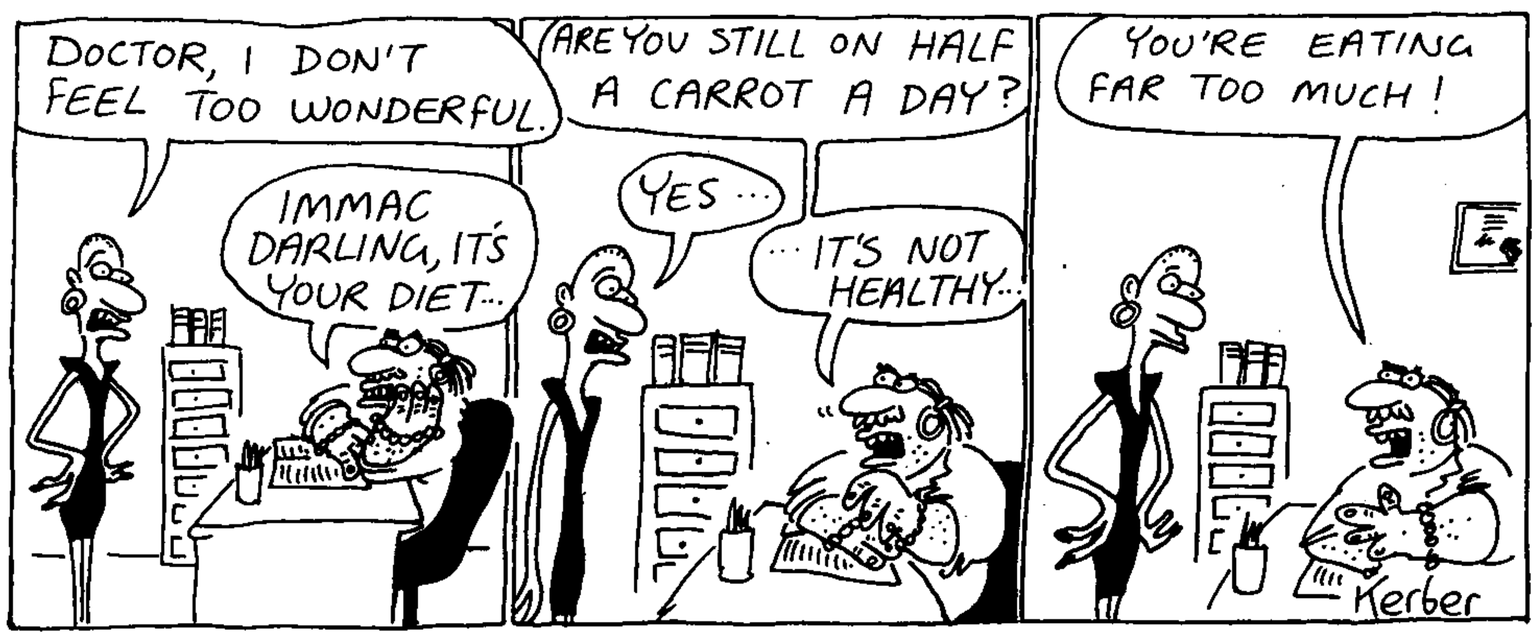
(That's enough candidates. Ed.)

JUST FANCY THAT



SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber


DOCTOR, I DON'T FEEL TOO WONDERFUL.
IMMAC DARLING, IT'S YOUR DIET...
ARE YOU STILL ON HALF A CARROT A DAY?
YES ...
... IT'S NOT HEALTHY...
YOU'RE EATING FAR TOO MUCH!
Kerber

FASHION

YES! LONG IS DEFINITELY BACK!

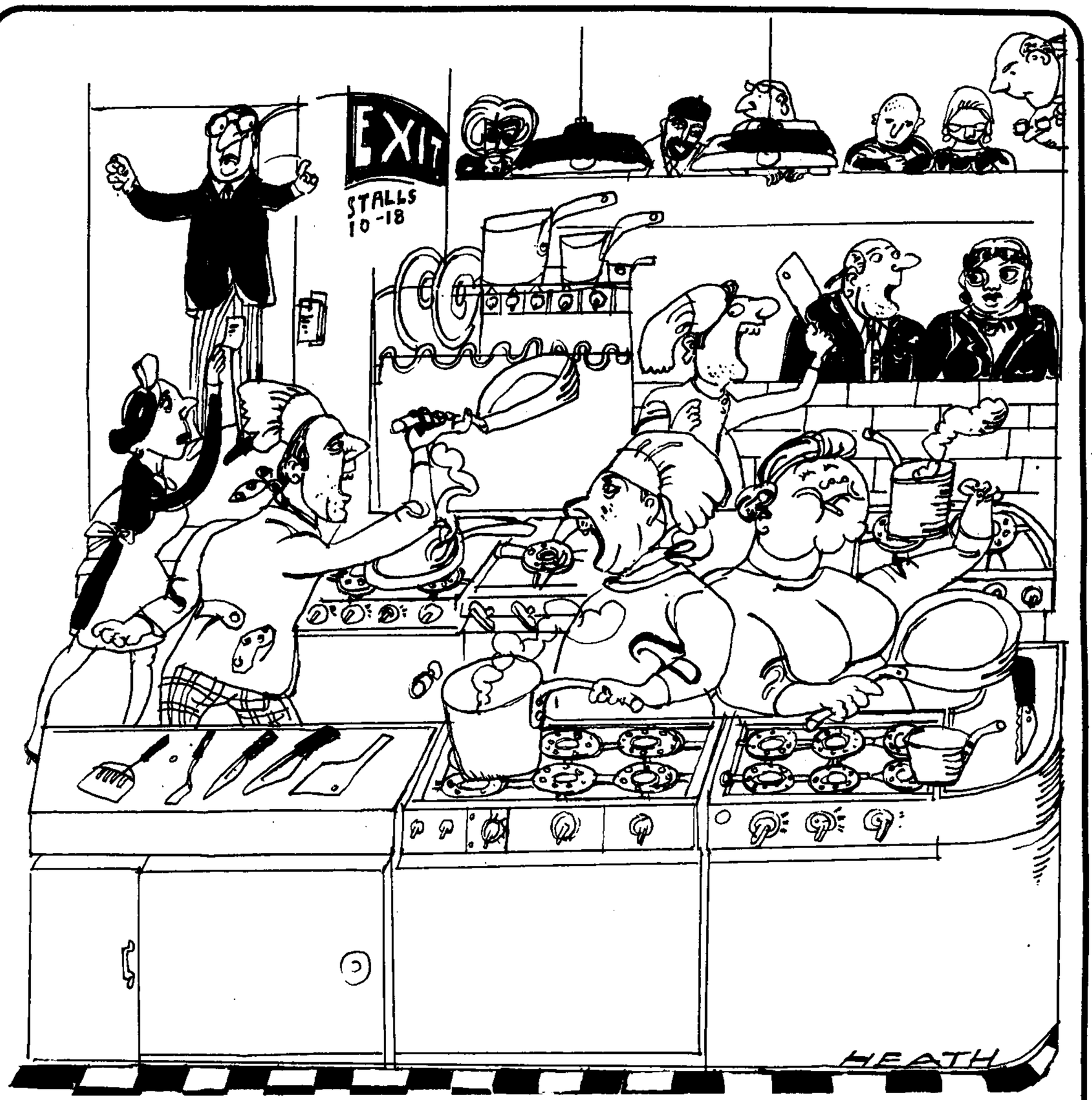
by Our Man On The Catwalk
John-Paul Ghastlier

MAKE no mistake! This year fashion editors everywhere are demanding the long look — all articles about fashion have to be extremely long. Thousands of words and vast pictures of models are *de rigueur* amongst leading newspapers this year.

This definitely signals an end to last year's "thin" look, when the craze for woefully thin pieces swamped the broadsheets. And it's a big thumbs down to the "short" style, which never really caught on anyway.

1994's top newspaper designers say: "Give us something *really* long to fill up the Lifestyle, Living, Metro and Section 2 sections! That's what we want."

One lifelong fashion editor, style guru Charles Moore, summed it up: "I think it's the end of the two-piece. What editors want is 10 pieces — and all of them really long." *(Continued on all other pages.)*



Great Bores Of Today.

"... I mean who buys that stuff? no one have you ever seen anyone walking about in those kind of clothes? there was someone in the paper this morning wearing a leather teapot and PVC boots and this is what women are supposed to be wearing would you wear that stuff or any of your friends? who are they trying to kid? fashion designers? I think they are taking the mickey did you see that one in the papers over the weekend? £18,000 for a g-string made out of aluminium that glowed in the dark you won't get that in Marks & Spencers I don't know why they make all this fuss every year no one's ever going to wear any of them they're ridiculous models might get away with it but you'd look pretty silly taking the kids to school wearing a fur mini-dress with a see-through t-shirt no they're laughing at us..."

I'VE TOLD THE POLICE ABOUT THESE WRITTEN DEATH THREATS I'VE BEEN RECEIVING, BARRY.
AND?
THEY'RE TAKING THEM SERIOUSLY ENOUGH TO LAUNCH A FULL INVESTIGATION.
GOOD. AND HOW DO THEY SUGGEST YOU SAFEGUARD YOURSELF FROM THIS NUTTER?
THEY TOLD ME TO STAY INDOORS AND KEEP A LOW PROFILE FOR A WHILE...
THAT DOESN'T EXACTLY FILL ME WITH CONFIDENCE...
I KNOW. WHAT SORT OF ADVICE IS THAT TO GIVE A CELEBRITY?!

TV HIGHLIGHTS

HURD AND MAJOR

by P. G. Wodehouse

(Jazzy music. Bertie Major is discovered leafing through copy of Daily Telegraph bearing front page headline STING WINS GRAMMY)

MAJOR: What ho, Hurd. Who's this Pergau chappie who seems to be getting us into a spot of bother?

HURD *(imperturbably shredding cabinet papers in corner):* If I may correct you, sir, Pergau is a dam in the country which they now call Malaysia.

MAJOR: But it says here that we slipped the chief Nabob of those parts £234 million in aid in the hopes that the aforesaid Johnny-Malay might put in an order for a few of our surplus Tornados.

HURD: The newspapers, sir, are as ever attempting to manufacture a "story" out of nothing. As the poet Platus observed...

MAJOR: Blow your chum Platus, Hurd. Is it true that we only dished out the aid moolah on condition that we'd make a few bob in return from flogging the jolly old instruments of death?

HURD: That is not the way I would care to put it before the Select Committee, sir.

MAJOR: Then dash it, Hurd, how would you care to put it?

HURD *(throwing more confidential papers onto roaring log fire):* I would prefer to say, sir, that there was a 'brief entanglement' on the matter.

MAJOR: Eh?

HURD: Let me put it another way, sir. "There was an incorrect temporary linkage during the first protocol."

MAJOR: I say, Hurd, could we have this in plain English for a change.

HURD: Very well, sir. This whole unfortunate mess can be attributed to your predecessor.

MAJOR: Aunt Magatha?

HURD: Indeed, sir, one and the same. We can tell the press that is was all the fault of Lady Thatcher and her friend Lord Younger.

MAJOR: Hurd, you are a bally genius! It must be all that fish you eat.

HURD: Indeed, sir, "Fishy" is my middle name.

(Major sits down at piano and sings "There is Nothing Like a Dam" in a light baritone)

THE END

THE NATIONAL WINNER OF MENSA MIND '93 WAS

MR RICHARD MUDDLE

of CHATHAM, KENT

Derbyshire Times

CALLING all: Housewives, students and the semi-retired. Help us to raise funds for the Birmingham Childrens' Hospital. Generous pay. Vehicle & phone required. Telephone Christ Now

Metronews

IS CATHOLICISM FINISHED?

Pope In Crisis Talks

Hume Pleads For Calm

by Our Man In Rome **Pope John-Paul Johnson**

THE 2,000-year-old Cathlolic Church was rocked to its foundations today by its controversial decision to admit Mr John Selwyn Gummer as a member.

A wave of riots spread around the globe, from Mexico to Guadeloupe, as angry mobs burned down cathedrals, chanting "Muerto a Gummonistas".

In Norway, the country's entire Catholic population of three set fire to themselves in a protest, carrying placards reading "Nøe Shittbaggs hier pliz".

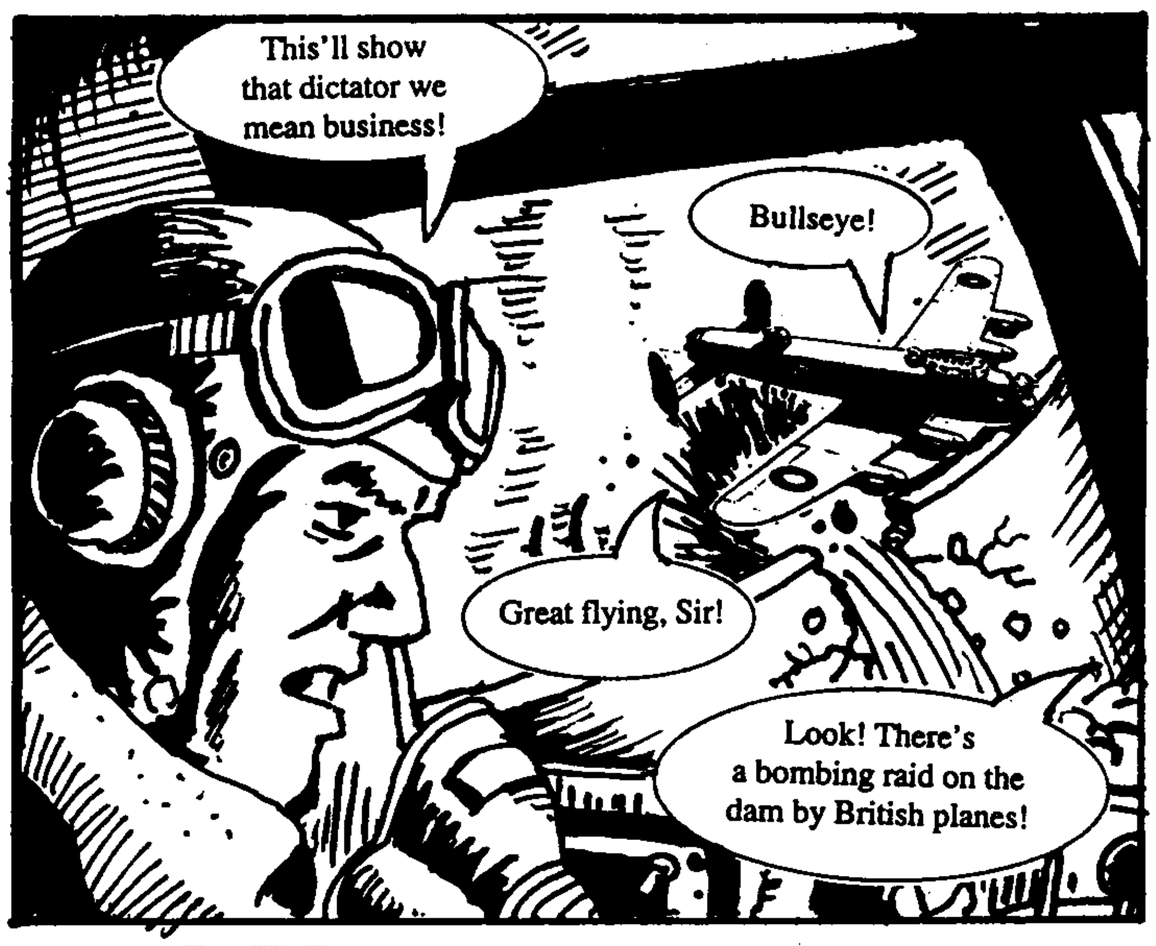
Papal Bull

In a hastily published encyclical, *De Selwynos Gummeres Convertiones,* the Pope pointed out that the Church had a divine obligation to annoy the Church of England by letting in clapped-out Tory politicians; and that it would be heretical to suggest that Mr Gummer was the "Beast" referred to in the Book of Revelations.

However it was reported that 10,000 Catholic priests were now planning to join the Orthodox Church, as the only church remaining "untainted by the virus of Gummerism".

Anne Widdecombe is 78.

Then...


This'll show that dictator we mean business!
Bullseye!
Great flying, Sir!
Look! There's a bombing raid on the dam by British planes!

and Now...

This'll show that dictator we want business!
Bullshit!
Great lying, Sir!
Look! We'll make a bomb out of aid on the dam to buy British planes!

Lines On The Olympic Triumph of Miss Jayne Torvill and Mr Christopher Dean

by William Rees-McGonagall (Midland Bank Poet of the Year)

'Twas in the year nineteen hundred and ninety-four
That the world witnessed a sight that people thought
they would see no more.
Namely the return of the great Torvill and Dean,
Of ice dancing they were the undisputed king and queen.

Ten years before in Sarajevo town
These two British champions had won the Olympic
crown
As they glided over the ice to the strains of Ravel's *Bolero*
Not one of the judges had given them a zero.

Indeed, it was sixes all round, an unprecedented score.
In fact, it was impossible technically to get any more.
And as they skated to victory to the music of Ravel,
It was extraordinary that down on the ice neither of them
fell (until the end).

Ten years passed during which they were lost from view
Indeed, people in pubs asked "I wonder what Torvill
and Dean now do."
Their triumph had now become a mere golden dream
Like the victory of England's 1966 World Cup soccer team.

Imagine then everyone's delight and surprise
When from the ashes of the past the famous pair did arise
Announcing that at Lillehammer they would compete
for gold
Even though many critics said they were getting a bit old.

This time they had worked out a brilliant new routine,
The most exciting and innovative there had ever been.
In place of Ravel they chose a song by Cole Porter.
If anything could help them win, 'twas said,
"this oughter".

On the night of the finals everyone in Britain stayed in to see
The acme of our nation's hopes live on TV.
Twenty-three million people were glued to their screen
To witness the predicted triumph of Torvill and Dean.

At last, after many Ukrainian and foreign skaters
Had been eagerly cheered on by their loyal maters
and paters,
The Hamar Stadium grew silent and the audience fell
into a trance
As they heard the inimitable strains of *Let's Face*
The Music And Dance.

Never had been witnessed since the earth's first day
Such a breathtaking and unforgettable skating display.
Pirouettes and glides, twirls and figures of eight:
Everyone in Britain agreed that Jayne and Chris were
truly first-rate.

But the foreign judges did not agree —
5.7, 5.6, 5.5, 5.4 and even a 5.3.
It was not possible. It had to be a fix.
As only the British judge had given them what they
deserved, i.e. six.
Then on came two Russians, Grichtchuk and Platov
To whom no one in his senses would have taken their
hat off.
Their routine was to the song *Rock Around the Clock*
And then the judges' verdict came as a terrible shock

For there on the scoreboard the unbelievable story was told.
Platov and Grichtchuk had somehow stolen the gold.
And in what will go down as one of history's all-time cons,
Torvill and Dean had only won the bronze.

© *W. Rees-McGonagall.*

HOW THE WORLD'S PRESS SAW IT

Torvill And Dean:
Nation In Mourning As
Foreign Judges Cheat
DAILY TELEGRAPH

REDS STEAL BRITISH GOLD
THE SUN

Grosse Vielle Anglaise Perds A
Olympiques: Ha Ha Ha!
LE FIGARO

**Englischer Schweinhunden
In Katastrofische Eisdanz
Finale: Ha Ha Ha!**
FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE

**Fatti Jayne und Toyboy Chris
Tøtallye Wøshed-Øp: Hø Hø Hø!**
OSLO TELEGRAPH

"Here's one — a Paki, a Coon and a Mick went into a pub..."

"And they found Jim Davidson a hopeless alcoholic..."

"And they laughed and laughed and laughed!"

■ **Thursday 17 February**
12.30pm **Gender and Feminist History Seminar**: *Out of the Drawing Room: Exclusion Strategies Against Women Composers, with Particular Emphasis on the Life and Works of Freda Swain.* M. Dyke, Room 120, Falmer House.

Sussex University

SCIENTIFIC OFFICER
Occupational Health Service, HM Navel Base Devonport

DESG advertisement

MONTGOMERY ACCEPTS UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

by Our Circulation War Correspondent
Hitler Hastings

The Longest Daily Telegraph

A DEJECTED and defeated General Whittam von Strobheim today signed the formal instrument of surrender which brought an end to the Desertingreaders War.

A ferret-faced Field-Marshal David Montgomery beamed triumphantly as the once-vaunted Indie Rats threw up their hands in total humiliation.

Addressing von Strobheim's tattered followers, Monty assured them "your jobs are safe until I decide to shoot you".

It's All-a-mine

It was only five short years ago that General von Strobheim's army had launched a seemingly unstoppable blitzkrieg through the broadsheet sector.

With his battle-cry "It is. Are you?", he appeared to be invincible. On all fronts, huge quantities of readers surrendered to his extraordinarily boring style, as the Times and the Telegraph went into headlong retreat.

But then, tragically, von Strobheim over-reached himself and tried to establish a Sunday bridgehead. It was the beginning of the end.

I Was Monty's Sub-Editor

Despite calling in Italian and Spanish allies, von Strobheim continued to make an astonishing series of tactical blunders. On one morning alone, 60,000 readers were lost, when Jim Slater was hired to run a share-tipping service.

On another, 40,000 readers were wiped out when General Rees-Mogg predicted that the collapse of the ERM would lead to a new ice age.

But yesterday came the final humiliation, as von Strobheim was finally forced to admit defeat at the hands of Montgomery.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Anglo-Malaysian Entente

From Sir Rodney Money-Suit.

Sir, While we all believe in a free press, one cannot condemn too strongly the irresponsible and ill-informed coverage by the British media of the so-called Pergau dam affair. Anyone who has recently visited the great country of Malaysia and had the privilege of meeting its very distinguished prime minister, the Hon. Mohamed Bakhanda, will know that it is a long-established custom of that country to give "presents" to anyone with whom one hopes to do business. These might be anything from a box of cigars from Fortnum & Mason to a £234 million "aid" package, to help the starving people of this thriving and forward-looking economy.

Yours faithfully,
SIR RODNEY MONEY-SUIT,
Chairman, Anglo-Malaysian Cement Co.,
Bakhanda House,
Kuala Lumpsum.

From Sir Trevor Bullet

Sir, I yield to no one in my admiration for British newspapers, several of which I own. But, as someone who has for some years been working night and day to land contracts with our Malaysian friends, solely in order to create a huge profit for myself *(surely 'to create much-needed jobs here in Britain'? Ed)*, I wish to register the strongest possible protest at the recent campaign of vilification of my trusted friend Tunku Bakhanda, the creator of modern Malaysia and the wisest statesman it has been my privilege to sell arms to.

Yours faithfully,
SIR TREVOR BULLET,
Chairman, Matrix-Bullet Armsco,
Bracknell and Kuala Lumpur.

From Mr R.B.J. Ringbinder

Sir, Let no one belittle the importance of a free press in a democracy such as ours. But the Sunday Times should be closed down and its editor burned to death, in accordance with ancient Malayan custom, for the sheer irresponsibility of his recent reporting, which has placed at risk my company's contracts to sell ring-binders to the Malaysian civil service. It now looks as though my company's investment in research and development gifts to His Highness the Tunku Bakhanda has been in vain, and all thanks to you, you bastards.

Yours faithfully,
R.B.J. RINGBINDER,
Office Supplies-'R- Us,
Basingstoke.

From Mr Andrew Kneel

Sir, As Editor of the world's most important Sunday newspapers, my editorial independence is sacrosanct and my right to free speech cannot be denied. I will not be told what to do by any foreign dictator. Just ask my proprietor, the Australian-American Mr Murdoch, who has told me to write this letter because he doesn't want to lose too much business in the Far East.

So, can't we all just be good friends?

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW KNEEL.
The Sunday Times.

HOW IT WILL LOOK

THE INDIE

NEW

IT IS. UP YOURS!

● Inside: How Vicious Mirrormen Clubbed Innocent Indie Seals To Death On Ice Floe

"Please help — my wife won't put down a Judith Krantz novel!"

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam: Lines Written On The Death Of Sir Harold Acton, Aesthete

So.
Farewell then
Harold Acton,
Aesthete.

You were
The last
Of your generation.
Good.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

From the immortal pen of SYEVTE KRIN, author of Born To Be Queen and Heir of Sorrows, comes...

STOLEN KISSES

THE STORY SO FAR: Charles returns from his skiing holiday to find his home has been burgled.

Now read on...

"IT REALLY is ... appalling." Charles led the well groomed figure of Chief Superintendent Campbell MacNaughtie into the bedroom of his St James's Palace Apartment.

"I haven't touched a thing," Charles explained as the two men surveyed the chaos that the intruder had left behind. Clothes were thrown everywhere — there on the floor was his French and Saunders polo jacket with its lining torn, and there were his Saint and Greavsie suede loafers scuffed at the toes. The drawers of the Louis Armstrong embonpoint had been turned out and the contents strewn over the apartment like the flotsam washed up on a lonely beach after a violent storm has exhausted its windy temper *(Get on with it. Ed.)*

The inspector walked thoughtfully to the broken window and looked out at the scaffolding. "This'll be how he gained entrance, Sire, if I'm not mistaken." Charles nodded.They were brilliant these chaps from CID. It was just like on the television. Who was his favourite, who liked opera and lived in Oxford? Inspector Mortimer was it? Diana had never much cared for him, typically.

"Was anything of value taken, Sir?" said the inspector, producing a notebook and licking the end of a pencil stub.

"Most of my things are in Gloucestershire... so there was nothing much here anyway... just a few rather personal items, so no, they are not of any value, but yes they *are* of value if you see what I mean."

The inspector eyed the heir to the throne quizzically as Charles continued: "I don't know if you've ever read anything by Sir Laurens Van der Post have you?"

"Not recently, Sire," the inspector replied.

"Only he makes this point that objects of real worth are literally sort of priceless like the moon and the stars and the pebbles on the beach and so forth."

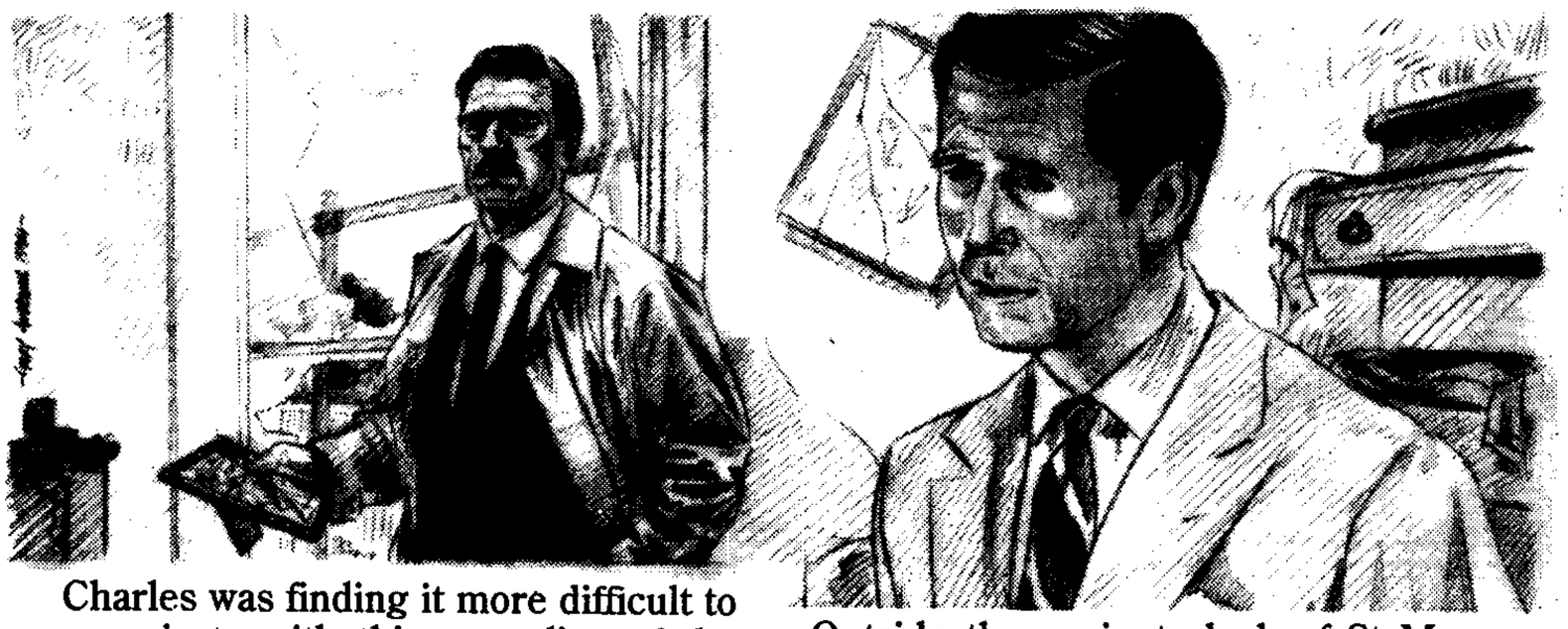
"Quite. Quite. So tell me, your Highness. What exactly *was* stolen?"

"I told you... sentimental thingies. Like the cup I won for the Art Prize at Gordonstoun. I made this glazed ashtray in the pottery class and painted on it 'Floreat Gordonstonia'..."

"So this ashtray is missing?"

"No, no. I gave it to Granny one Christmas. No, the cup is missing."

The inspector looked up from his notes. "So it was a pottery cup was it?"



Charles was finding it more difficult to communicate with this custodian of the law than he had expected.

"No. No. It was a sort of plasticky-silver cup, but that's not vitally important anyway. What I'm really missing is these gold cufflinks from Torvill and Dean in Jermyn Street. They were engraved with the initials er... er..."

The inspector's penetrating eye gleamed suddenly. "That would be a C and D, would it not, Sir, for Charles and Diana?"

It was then that Charles remembered that the inspector on television sometimes pretended to be more stupid than he actually was in order to lure a suspect into some indiscretion. Who was the other detective in the raincoat with the funny eye... Lord Palumbo? Something like that?

"C and D was it?" repeated Inspector MacNaughtie with a slight hint of menace.

"Er... I can't remember. It was all a long time ago."

"Yet they meant a lot to you did they, these initialled cufflinks?"

The Inspector's quiet brogue purred on. Charles noticed that he had picked up a portrait in a silver frame with the glass shattered.

"And who would this lady be, Sir?"

"Oh... just a friend... or maybe a film star. I used to collect autographs when I was at Cambridge."

The inspector read out an inscription scrawled in a flowery hand on the front of the photograph. "'To my darling Prince. Your one and only Ludmilla Parker-Knoll.' Now which particular film did she star in? Something I might have missed?"

Charles was feeling distinctly uncomfortable and was beginning to resent the Inspector's tone. He decided to go on the attack. "This picture hasn't been stolen, so I don't see why you are asking me these questions about Ludmilla or whoever she is. Can we get back to the cufflinks, please?"

"Very well Your Highness. Now what were these initials, sire. C and L perhaps?"

"Of course, you fool. I mean no. I can't remember. Perhaps they were..." Charles stammered in confusion.

"And what would the L stand for, if it *was* an L?"

"Er... Er... Linley... Viscount Linley. That's it... he made the cufflinks, he's very clever like that. He went on a course designing and so forth and he made me a wheelbarrow once out of balsa wood..."

Charles's voice petered out and the two men stood in silence amidst the debris.

Outside the ancient clock of St Magnus Pyke chimed midday. "You said there were some other items. Letters I gather..."

"Did I? Oh, perhaps I did. Except I didn't. Who said anything about letters from Ludmilla? Anyway I don't want them back even though they haven't been stolen do you understand?"

The inspector sat down on the edge of the royal bed and began to leaf through his notes.

"So let me get this straight. Apart from the silver cup and the cufflinks, you are reporting the theft of nothing at all."

"That's right. Except the cufflinks. I don't think they *were* here now I think of it. They must be at Highgrove. Yes, that's it. I remember seeing them by my bed. That's the truth, Inspector."

"So. I am investigating the theft of a silver-style plastic cup from Gordonstoun valued at perhaps 10p?" MacNaughtie stood up and buttoned his raincoat. "Very good, Sire. I'll put the whole force onto it at once. You never know — sometimes these things turn up at car boot sales." He gave a stiff bow. "Don't worry, Sir, I'll see myself out."

Charles stared disconsolately at the tangled mess left all around him. It was almost a metaphor for something, he thought dimly as the clock struck again.

Nigel Dumpster's HOLLYWOOD Diary

IT'S THAT time of the year again, with the entire Hollywood establishment eagerly awaiting the annual Dempster Movie Honours List, now rightly seen as a pointer to the Academy Awards ceremony.

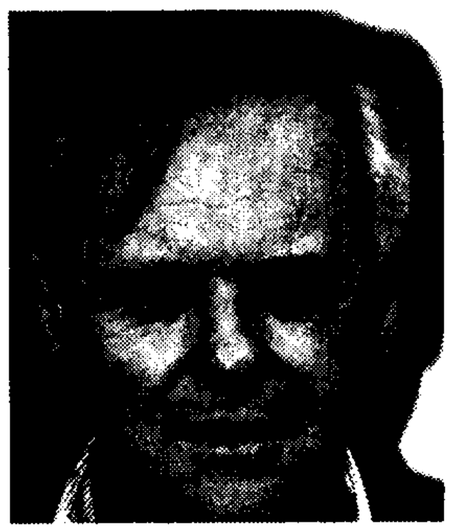
Star in Ascendant

■ ONE MAN whose star is definitely in the ascendant is Michael "Wacky" Jackson, 34. The much-loved family entertainer's future as a pop star seems assured, but Michael has confided in me exclusive details of his latest project — a remake of the classic film, *The Sound of Music*.

Later, "Wacky" sobbed into his beautifully tailored glove (by Mayfair's Rupert Heseltine, who also supplies Princess Michael of Kent) as he relived his terrible ordeal at the hands of my down-market competitors. "So many horrible things have been written about me, Nigel. They even said that I was in a drug rehabilitation clinic in London. In fact I was staying with the Duchess of York — she and Johnny are so kind."

Best Newcomer

■ A NEWCOMER whose name I confidently expect to be on everyone's lips this time next year is Cecil Day-Lewis, 24, a young Shakespearean actor from the Dublin suburb of Kent. Cyril, 23, has just finished filming Michael Winner's *The Age of Innocence*, alongside Kim Basinger and Martyn Lewis. "I'd never used a chainsaw before, but Michael soon put me at ease!" he quipped when we bumped into each other at Nastassja Kinski's barbecue.



Anthony Newley

New Terminator?

■ *HELENA BONHAM-CARTER will take over the role of The Terminator from Arnold Schwarzenegger, I understand, following her success in the British film Howard's Duck.*

Ken & Em

■ VISITING historic Sunset Boulevard, I encounter Emma Thompson, 24, and Kenneth "Ken" Branagh, 35, who I can exclusively reveal are married, despite having different surnames. "Emma," I asked on your behalf, "my readers want to know what you make of these rumours about your affair with Al Pacino. They're nearly as bad as those stories about 'Ken' and Kylie Minogue, aren't they?"

"There aren't any rumours," she confided. "I know," I replied, "but you'd be very upset if somebody put that sort of thing about, wouldn't you?" Smiling bravely, Emma, who I expect to pick up her first Oscar for her role in *[Adam: fill in film's name here — it's one of those things with men in suits. There was something about in the Sunday Times magazine, if that's any help. N.D.]* pleaded: "Actually, I don't give a toss."

As we parted, I promised the heartbroken thespian that I would come to her and "Ken's" aid. "Don't worry, I'll print a story saying nobody should believe these lies. That'll stop the gossip." One is always only too happy to be of service.

PS Dross Benson

■ *WHILE I've been braving the earthquakes, mudslides and traffic congestion of "sunny" California (courtesy of Richard Branson's Virgin Airlines, whose deputy chief assistant publicity coordinator Lucina Crouton-Saab, 33, is a first cousin, twice removed, of charity worker Ernest "Guinless" Saunders) I hear news from home about the continuing decline of the dreary Daily Express. Sadly its circulation is now only half what it was when I worked there, largely due to the ill-informed chatterings of one Dross Benson.*

I understand one particular item in his so-called Diary yesterday caused great amusement at Buckingham Palace. Incredibly, Dross confused Lady Caroline Archer-Wilde, the 25-year-old aromatherapist daughter of Royal florist "Whipper" Archer-Wilde, with her 24-year-old cousin, Pamela Archer-Wilde, a fully trained colour mood consultant recently engaged to Barry Smyth-Corona, 37, the heir to the Rentokil fortune. Over breakfast the Queen was heard to say: "Look at this, Philip. Absolutely ridiculous. Nigel Dempster would never have made a mistake like that." True, of course. Poor old Lord Stevens must be dreading his next Garden Party invite — if it's ever issued!

NEW WORDS

by Philip Howard

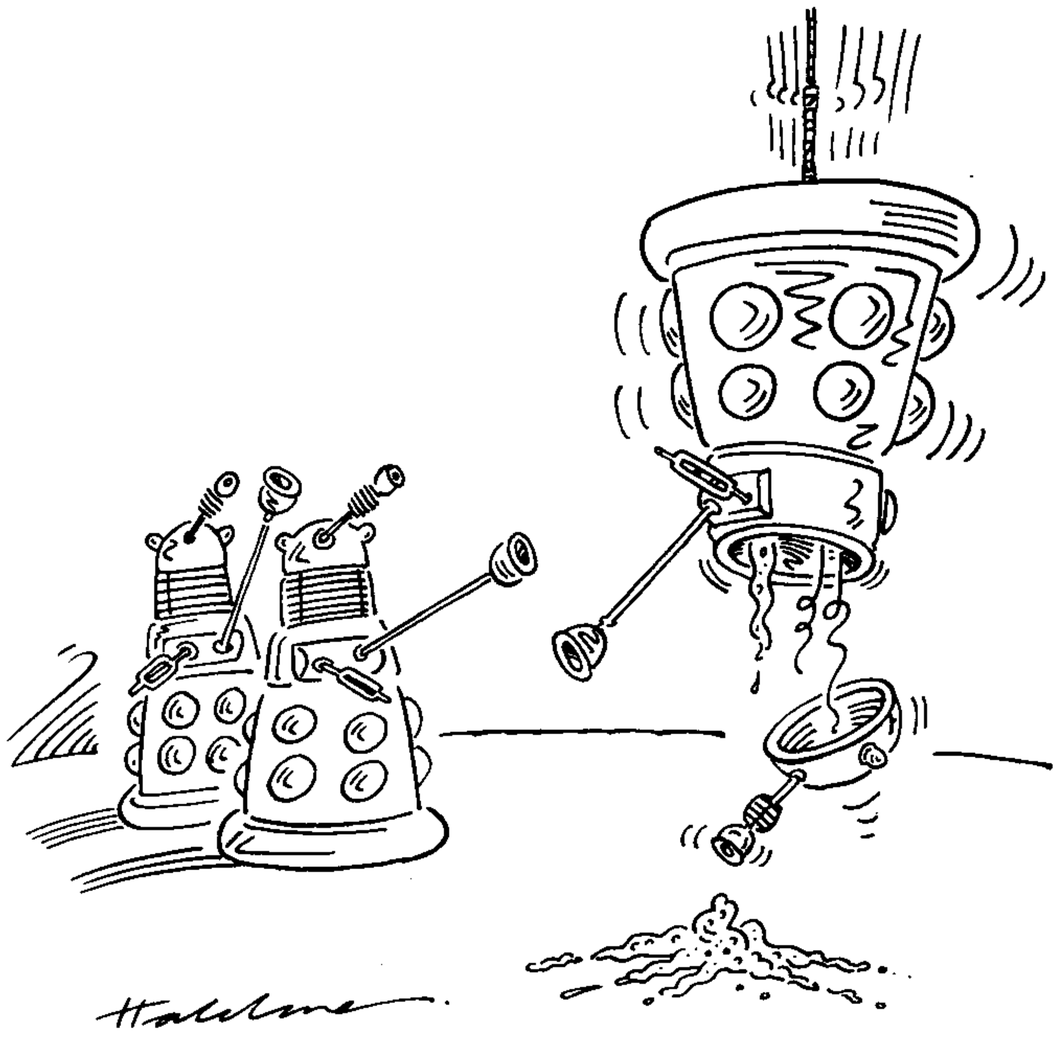
LYELL
n. terminological inexactitude, untruth, colloq. 'whopper'. Examples: "He told a blatant lyell"; "it's nothing but a tissue of lyells" (from Old English *attorney general*).

PERGAU
n. unit of Malaysian currency, worth approx. £234 million. Example: "Buddy, can you spare a pergau?" (from Malaysian hit musical *Annie Get Your Guns From Us*).

HITE
n. invented statistic used to make feminist point and sell book. E.g. "Have you seen that hite in the paper — apparently 92.7 per cent of all men abuse their children and then kill them." (Contemporary American slang.)

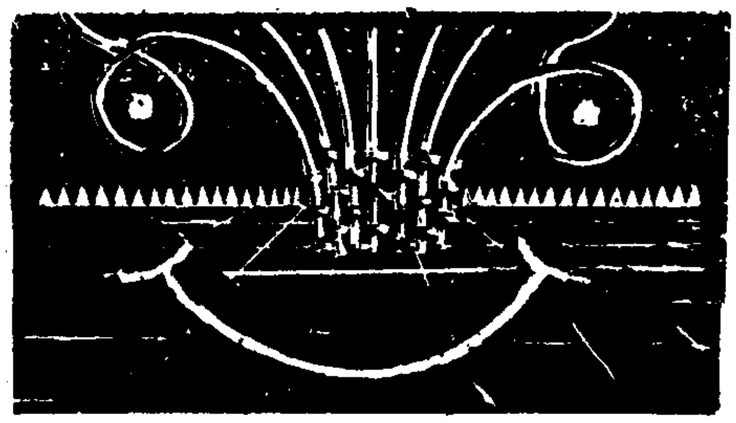
ATHERTON
n. One who raises false hopes, esp. in sporting field. E.g. "I think Venables is going to turn out a bit of an atherton" (commonly heard on terraces, 1994).

HEWITT
v. to experience strong sense of nausea after reading newspaper article about Princess Diana. E.g. "That stuff in the Express really made me hewitt" (see also under Holden).



"I warned him not to try bungee jumping"

DIARY



DAMIEN HIRST

Fuck me, I could murder a bloody burger. That was the first thing that came into my head when I woke up one afternoon a couple of months ago. Then I thought: *that's a great name for a work of art.* So I set about creating something pretty fucking fantastic from burgers. Like, first I rang round my friends — or my contemporaries as I call them — and asked all about burgers.

"What are they — vegetables, are they?" I said. "Do they grow in the ground or what?"

"Nah!" they said. "Burgers isn't vegetables — they're *meat*, man."

"Meat?" I said. "Meat? But you don't see burgers running round in fields. What are they, then, hedgehogs or something?"

"Nah!" they said. "They're cows!"

"But they're too small for cows, man."

"Nah!" they said. "They cut them up."

"Bloody fucking marvellous," I said. "I'll buy a cow for fifty quid, cut it in half, put one half in one glass cabinet, the other half in another, and sell each half *at exactly the same time* to a different Saatchi." And that's how my latest exhibit, 'Fuck Me, I Could Murder a Burger' came to be created. Don't ask me what it means, I only created it, but to me it's about how people are just babies when they are born, and about how life ends in death, and about how no one can really ever know what's going on in someone else's mind, and, most important of all, it's about 100 grand plus VAT, know what I mean?

You have to be a nutter on some level to do what I do. I mean, basically I'm a bloody nutcase. A bloody fucking great nutcase. Like, I'm a rebel, and I like to stick two fingers up at the Establishment, getting really pissed and telling them the unpalatable truth about life and death and the whole fucking thing.

I went to a dinner party at Charles Saatchi's pad last night. Everyone was there — Lords, Sirs, celebrities, presidents of this and that, toffs, the lot — and I really showed them what's what. First, I drank my champagne in a really surly way — the surliest possible way you can possibly drink champagne — just to show I wasn't taken in by the whole 'glamour' and 'expense' trip. And Lord Linley was there, too, and the Lloyd Webbers. Second, for the first course, which was some sort of fucking paté, like a human brain all mashed up, I specially used the big knife, which was meant for the main course, and I didn't care who the fuck saw me do it, and this really threw them, this really rubbed their noses in it, because it meant that when the main course came I just used the smaller knife, which was really in 'conventional' terms meant for the fucking paté. And the President of the Royal Academy was there too. See, in my book, it's the whole purpose of an artist to shock and disconcert, and I can't just stop being an artist because I'm at someone's house having dinner, right? Anyway, the third thing I did to bloody shock them out of their bourgeois complacency was to say "What a load of fucking crap" out loud to myself as I was driving away in my Porsche, and that showed them, that really fucking showed them, or would have done if they'd been around but luckily they weren't.

I smoke cigarettes — ten or twenty a day. Sometimes even over twenty — twenty-one or twenty-two. And then I stub them out in ashtrays. That's the kind of guy I am. Dangerous. Unconventional. *Obsessive*. Call me a nutter. Call me a rebel. But first of all call me an ***artist***.

Ordinary people — *real* people — understand my work much better than any lah-di-dah critics. They aren't prejudiced, you know. Like, when I was showing my last but one work, 'Mindful Of His Reputation The Artist Produces Another Horrible Piece Contemplates His Bank Balance and Temporarily Forgets About Death', which as you know consists of a fresh salmon baked in tin-foil, cut in ten pieces and then eaten, leaving only the bones, an old lady came up and stared at it and stared at it for literally ages and ages so eventually I went up to her, right, and asked what she thought of it. And you know what she said? She looked at me and she said: "Is it meant to be the end of a meal?" That was absolutely fantastic, a totally genuine response to what she saw, with none of that art-world crap, because she saw absolutely what it was all about: we are at the end of a meal, all of us, and the next one hasn't begun yet, and we don't even know what restaurant we're going to get it from, do we? But she didn't have any money, so I had to tell her to piss off out of it. You've gotta have what it takes, if you know what I mean, catalogue on request.

A Load of Bollocks. That's the short title of my next piece, the longer title being 'A Load of Bollocks Going Nowhere, Meaning Nothing, Costing Thousands'. It consists of over three hundred different bollocks from all sorts of animals, including humans — Norman Rosenthal's donated two of his — injected with formaldehyde and formed into a sort of oblong pyramid before being cut in half and mounted. It'll really get them talking and it's already made a lot of people totally re-evaluate their whole concept of what is art and what isn't art. Okay, so most of them decided straightaway it isn't art, but what the fuck, what the bloody fuck.

You know what they call me? They call me the master of the macarb mercabe murkabre, the master of the not very nice, that's what they call me. I've created a whole new deeply disturbing revolution in art and made everyone rethink everything they've ever thought of rethinking because I'm an artist for today, right, and I'm doing things that have never been done before in the whole history of art and if anyone says my stuff's not art, well, I'm sorry but it is, because what I'm doing now is exactly what Marcel Duchamp and that lot was doing seventy years or more ago, so it's part of a bloody seventy-year tradition of deeply disturbing revolution in art, so there. Fuck me, I could murder a bloody burger. Hey, that's a great name for a work of art, I'll sell it to my pal Saatchi-boy in the morning, once I've ordered up the corpse and the glue, right?

Ryedale Tory MP John Greenway, a former policeman, led the case for a return of hanging for police officers, claiming it would make criminals think twice before carrying guns and knives.

Daily Mail

Since Parliament made homosexual acts between consenting adults lawful, one of the most penetrative lobbies in British history has formed and made its weight felt.

Paul Johnson, The Spectator

Literary Review

Bullet to the braindead

White Ghost
Shaun Hutson
(Little, Brown £15.99)

'ORROR hasn't half got posh these days. Stephen King is the darling of the dorky students who write the *Modern Review*. Clive Barker is turning into Tolkein, all frills and trolls, and James Herbert has become a virtuous eco-bore. Never mind: down at the ICA they still love horror because it's "transgressive" — la-di-da for "perverted and pleased with itself".

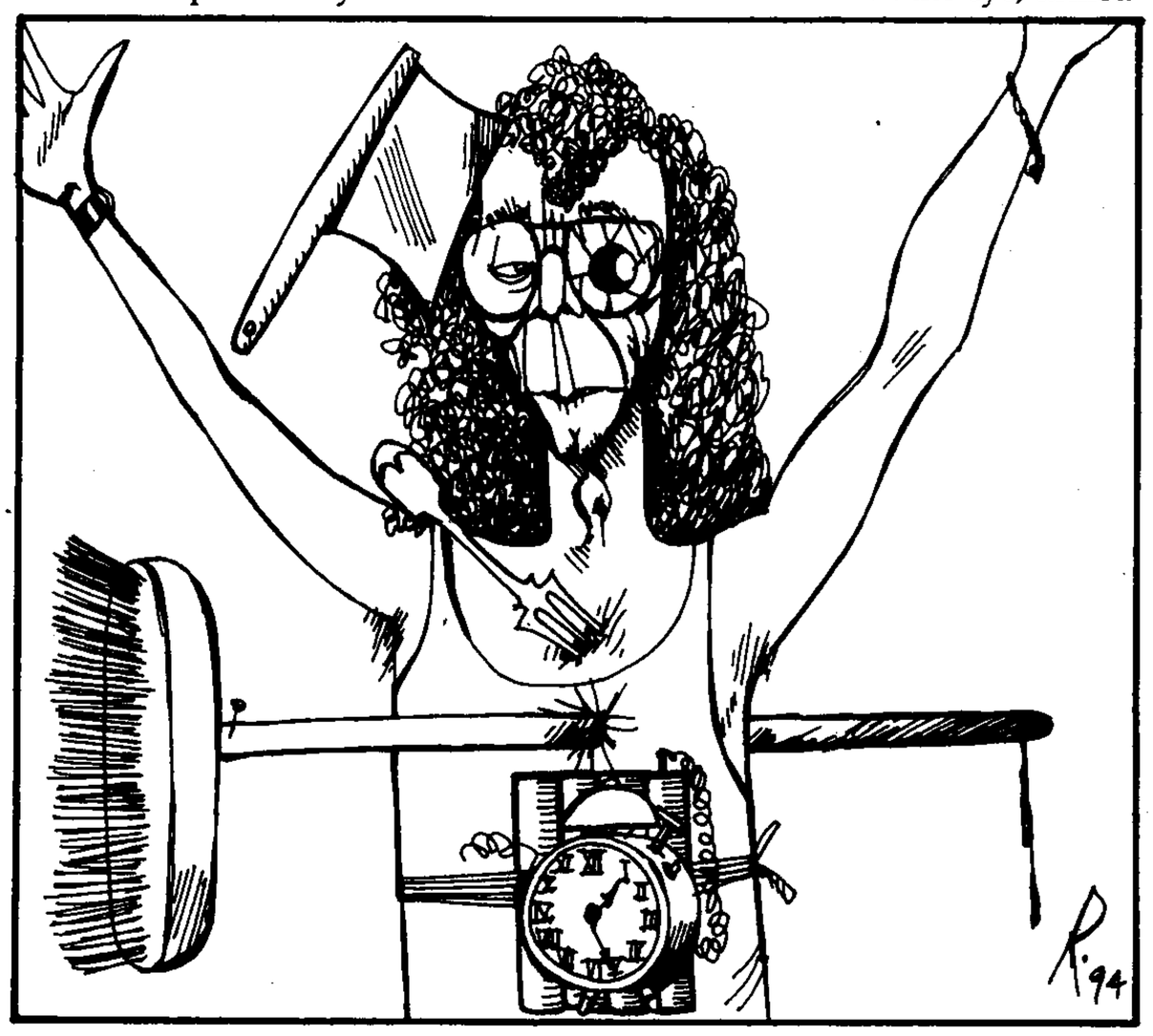
However, in this general move upmarket a few revolting specimens have had to be left behind. One such untouchable is Shaun Hutson. He sells well, outdone only by King and Herbert in this country, but somehow nobody is prepared to take him seriously. Ask the trendy twerps who love Schwarzenegger and Japanese filth-comics what they think of him and they come over all embarrassed. The truth is, he's hopelessly common.

It's not as if he's not trying to improve himself. He began in the sewers, literally. In 1982, his first big success, *Slugs*, described the borough of Merton being invaded by millions of gigantic and vicious slugs, which ate people alive, displaying, naturally, a special predilection for juicy private parts.

Plotting and characterisation have never been Hutson's forte. The hero of *Slugs* was a Merton council health inspector called Mike. What Hutson is all about is pain, injury and disgust, which *Slugs* delivered in abundance. A typical sentence: "Palmer's screams became fainter as the slugs ate their way into him, a number burrowing up through his torn genitals, using his anus as a means of access in their search for the softer, more succulent parts of his body."

Since then Hutson has superficially moved up a genre into the Jack Higgins-type thriller, with no fantasy or supernatural component. *White Ghost* is artfully titled to suggest that it is still spooky, but actually it refers only to the Chinese term for westerners: the book is a mundane thriller. Doyle, a violent "counter terrorist", is ordered to track down a consignment of guns that the IRA has stolen. He does so killing freely as he goes. Discovering that the IRA has formed criminal links with the Triads, he comes back to London and kills lots of slitty-eyes. The End.

The plot proceeds by the simple mechanism of Doyle meeting people and then killing them, or, hey, not meeting them before killing them. In total, the murder of over 40 people is described. In the meantime, Doyle says "fuck" a lot and scorns everybody. Hutson himself admits his books "are not like novels. They're not built up from my command of the English language [which] is not that great." No, indeed. He also says that Doyle's "the closest character to me that I've ever created", astounding those who had taken the slugs for his most detailed self-portrait.



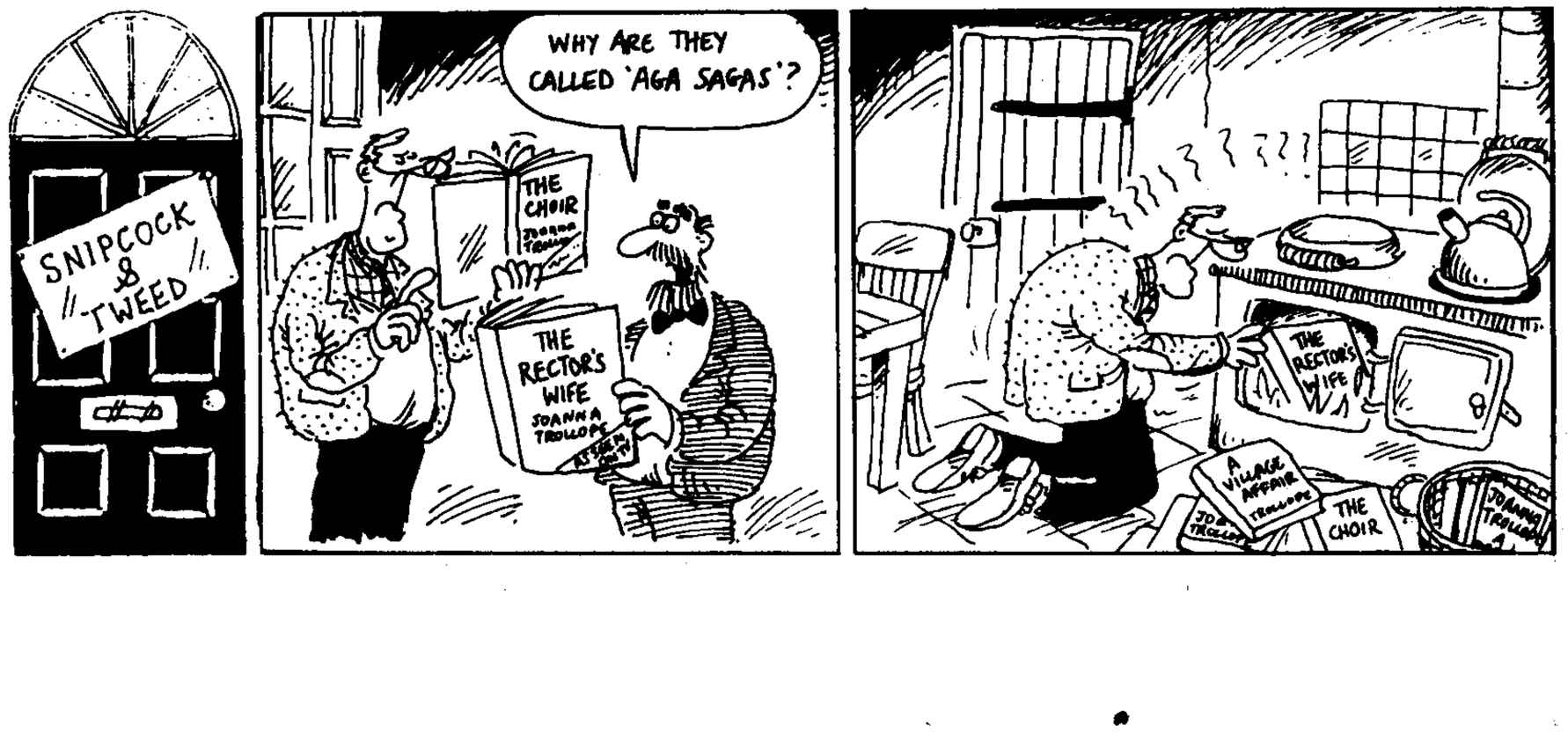
On the sleeve of *White Ghost*, it's claimed that Hutson has created a new literary hybrid combining and horror and thriller elements. What his work actually proves is that whatever the plot pretext for contemplating hideous injuries and obscene torments, the ghoulish motive remains the same.

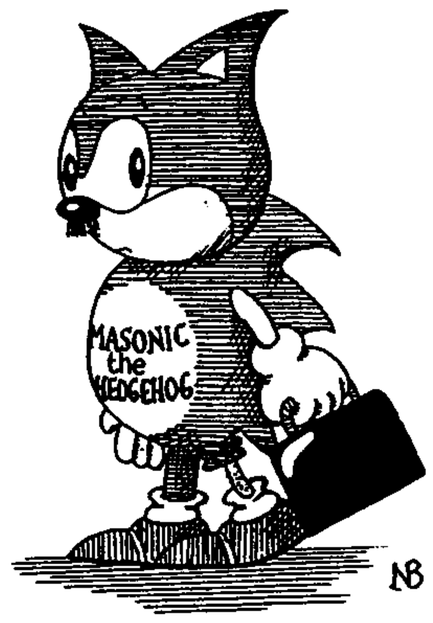
Hutson's novels merely stagger and crawl from one such barbarous scene to the next. What's odd is how formulaic and repetitious these moments of violence are when he gets to them. Like Jack Higgins, Hutson has a very small vocabulary, self-plagiarising so much he gives the impression of relying on the save-get facility on a word-processor. Like Higgins, however, he doesn't use new technology. The robotics in his own head serve the same function.

To be sure, there's some little variety of carnage of on offer, involving cleavers, broom handles, forks, headbutts, neckbreaks, car crashes, explosions and a broken bottle. But using the same sentence structure and the same words, with minimal variation, obviously offers Hutson some kind of ritualistic satisfaction.

He especially likes to trace the wound inflicted by a bullet. "A bullet struck him in the right eye, drilled the socket empty and took away most of the back of the head" (page 29). Shall we just see that again? " A bullet struck him in the eye, drilled the socket empty and erupted from the base of his skull" (page 96). And once more, with feeling? "It penetrated the bone easily, staving in the zygoma, bursting the eye and ploughing effortlessly through the brain before erupting..." etc. etc.

This is the writer enthusiastically described by the unfussy *Bookseller* as "the foremost portrayer of graphic violence, sickening horror and depraved sleaze". He's the one so many men who don't otherwise venture into the decipherment of the written word prize so highly. Here we have one of the successful literary careers of the day. Truly, as Hutson says at one point, the pain is "excruciating".





BOOKS & BOOKMEN

☐ A SIGNIFICANT part of Hodder & Stoughton business was, historically, religious books. Leading Hodder Headline religious authors have just found, however, that they are sharing a list which predominantly features soft porn.

While shining-faced authors such as Richard Foster, Michael Harper, Cliff Richard, Rob Parsons, Joyce Huggett and Colin Urquhart were just about able to live on the same list as the likes of Stephen King (who has professed a belief in the Almighty) and James Herbert (a Roman Catholic), they are less than comfortable at being in bed with the likes of *Sex Drive: The Complete Programme for Revitalising your Sex Life; The New Sexual Revolution; Sex: An Oral History; Position Of The Week; Sex: A Users Manual* **(thank you Georges Perec);** *The Book of Love; How to Improve Your Sex Life; The Family Guide to Sex and Intimacy* **and** *The Massage Manual* **as well as raunchy novels such as Britt Ekland's** *Sweet Life* **("laced with glamour, action and sex", according to Headline's catalogue); Roberta Latow's** *A Rage to Live* **("The new novel of unbridled sexuality from the first lady of hanky panky", oozes the** *Sunset Times***); Fiona Walker's** *French Relations* **("Lots of lust, bed-hopping, unresolved sexual tension", purrs the Hodder catalogue); and Laramie Dunaway's** *Women on Top.*

Grim Steely Hatchetman has briefed old softie Eric "Major" Major, already demoted by the appalling new regime to be in charge of religion and who has to hang around for a few years to collect his pension, to assuage his authors' consciences by explaining to them that these books help sexually naive and confused people to enhance heir lives — thus also contributing to the sum total of human happiness... not to mention Hodder's bank balance.

■ AFTER MONTHS of legal wrangling, the treasury has offered an author £75 plus legal costs for admitting having plagiarised his book *Successful Marketing For The Small Business*, sponsored by the *Torygraph* and published by Kogan Page.

Author and lecturer Dave Patten was preparing a talk on marketing when he noticed that the supplied course booklets produced by the DTI had a familiar ring about them. Several pages had been lifted from his own book.

Patten used to be a civil servant, advising small businesses, until he was removed for being too critical of the lack of government help. It is hardly of consolation to him that this government has now helped itself to his work.

'Bookworm'

footnotes

Yes, it's gag week!

EVERYONE, even Lord Justice Scott, is horrified by "gagging orders" (known in the cabinet office as public immunity certificates) with which ministers deny people the information they need to get justice. But only the other day three of Scott's colleagues in the court of appeal upheld gagging orders which denied a man justice — and ruined his life — without even bothering to look at them.

Andrew Balfour was an experienced and competent foreign office official. In 1989 he was British consul in Dubai, where he issued visas to Britain. Like other FO officials, he worked closely with MI6. He had instructions from his controlling MI6 officer to "keep an eye" on Mehrdad Ansari Shirazi, an Iranian citizen who had arrived recently in Dubai from Turkey, where he had been expelled for gun-running.

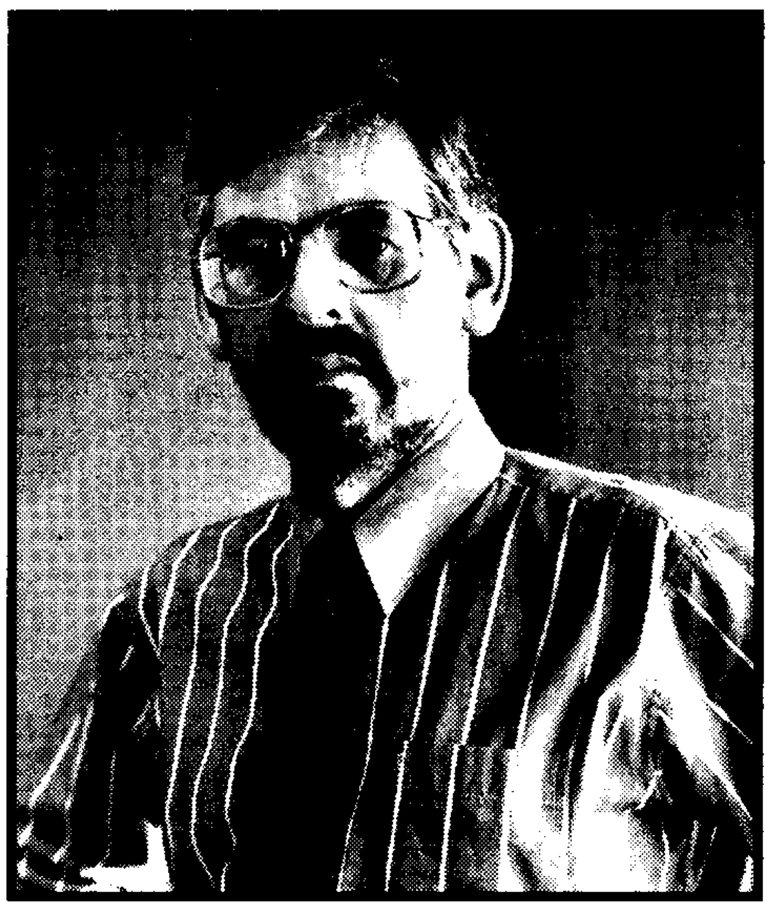
Balfour befriended Ansari and visited him several times. When Ansari said he wanted some printing done in Britain, Balfour gave him the name of his father-in-law, a printer in Sussex. £5,000 was paid by Ansari into the father-in-law's account as an advance payment for printing work.

In the spring of 1989, a new young MI6 official, recently transferred from army intelligence in Northern Ireland, arrived in Dubai. He did not consult his superior officers and became convinced that Balfour and Ansari were corruptly selling visas to Britain.

In May 1989, on arrival at his office, Balfour was arrested and refused permission to go home. He was bundled into a plane and taken to London where he was interrogated by special branch. He was suspended from his job at the foreign office. In August he was arrested under the prevention of terrorism act and interrogated about "assisting a known terrorist" — Ansari. His home was raided and his eight-year-old daughter told: "Your daddy will be going to prison for a long time." Balfour's name was leaked by MI5 to the *Daily Mail*, which published it on the front page.

Before long, after anxious discussions, special branch and the security services began to realise that they had made a terrible mistake. Balfour was released. The attorney-general announced that there would be no charges. But the foreign office sacked him anyway.

Two weeks after Balfour's release, Mehrdad Ansari arrived in Britain. The following month, September 1989, he was also arrested under the prevention of terrorism act. He was released, and, four months later, granted permission to stay permanently in Britain where he has two



***Sacked for helping MI6:** Andrew Balfour:*

London flats and a very nice house in the country.

Balfour sued the FO for wrongful dismissal. To win his case, he had to prove firstly that when he befriended Ansari and told him about his father-in-law, he was carrying out explicit instructions from MI6; and secondly that Ansari, the "known terrorist" he had been accused of befriending and soliciting, had been allowed into Britain permanently by the very authorities which had denounced him.

The government has proof of both these things. Balfour knows the dates and references of letters from MI6 instructing him to befriend Ansari. The home office also has an immigration file on Ansari, showing why the security services authorised his residency visa.

But the government refused to surrender these documents to the industrial tribunal. Foreign secretary Douglas Hurd signed two public immunity certificates preventing the disclosure of the MI6 instructions. Kenneth Baker, then home secretary, did the same for the Ansari immigration file. The tribunal refused even to demand to look at the documents to see if they should be kept secret.

On went the case to the court of appeal. The case there, three months ago, was held up a moment while Mr Justice Hirst, a former libel barrister who once served in army intelligence, said he knew Douglas Hurd at Eton, and lived not far away from him in lovely Oxfordshire. No one took exception to this, and Mr Justice Hirst and his colleagues went on to decide that they were not even going to look at the documents to see if they should be released.

Their case was summed up by the senior judge, Lord Justice Russell, who declared:

"If a responsible minister stated that production of a document would seriously jeopardise public safety, it is inconceivable that any court would make an order for the document's production."

Andrew Balfour feels he is a victim of an appalling intelligence blunder, exacerbated by the age-old feud between MI5, which regards Ansari as a terrorist, and MI6, which sees him as an intelligence asset. Balfour is appealing to the House of Lords. In the three years since he was sacked he has been applying for jobs and is still unemployed.

THE THINGS THEY SAY

"It is not the purpose of judges to be representative of the community".

John M.Taylor, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Lord Chancellor's Department.
House of Commons, 31 Jan.

THE BRIDGEWATER CASE

A Millar fails

■ MR WILLIAM MILLAR, of the C3 "injustices" division of the home office, has been writing long but not entirely accurate letters justifying the convictions in the Carl Bridgewater murder case.

Of the crucial confession of Pat Molloy, Mr Millar wrote (on 5 January): "He (Molloy) also made admissions to several prison officers who gave evidence at the trial."

Three prison officers gave evidence at the trial about conversations with Molloy. None of them made notes of their conversation.

Two officers were from Shrewsbury prison. Francis Edwards said Molloy had told him: "I allowed myself to become involved... I am not making any excuses. I knew he had a gun." Asked "which one of them used" the gun, Molloy had replied : "The one who is about 46."

Molloy's counsel, John Gorman, had no difficulty in showing that this was not an admission to anything — merely a reference to his "being involved" and a statement that someone else had a gun. Molloy knew long before the murder that his friend James Robinson had a gun.

Ronald Fuller, said Molloy told him: "I didn't kill him, boss. It was the bastard 19-year-old." This was the exact opposite of an admission and it accused a completely different suspect to the 46-year-old Molloy is alleged to have accused to another officer.

Ronald Shields, from Leicester prison, said Molloy told him: "Robinson had the gun. Robinson done it." Mr Shields went on: "He said he had ben there but he hadn't done anything about the gun".

Molloy, through his counsel, strongly denied ever using these words. The judge in his summing up did not even mention the evidence of Fuller or Shields, and certainly never suggested that Molloy had made an 'admission' to either of them.

Millar's attitude to these facts has hardened opinion against him among those campaigning for a reopening of the Bridgewater case. This week a letter from Islington North Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn asks home secretary Michael Howard to take Millar off the case altogether.

Norris ♥loves♥ lorries

■ THE London lorry ban, introduced by the old Greater London Council in 1986, worked quite well and allowed lots of Londoners to sleep at night. Obviously, then, the government had to get rid of it.

It was the usual story. A special committee called the Transport Task Force was asked for its views. The committee was packed with redundant Thatcherites like Christopher Chope, a former Wandsworth council leader and transport minister, and businessmen who either gave money to the Tories or made money from lorries. Or both.

The chairman was Duncan Bluck, director of haulage and shipping combine John Swire, which gave £179,000 to the Tory party between 1989 and 1992. The committee also had two board members from the privatised Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, the president of the bus company Yorkshire Rider, and assorted businessmen from air transport. There were no trade unionists, no lorry drivers nor a single representative of Londoners whose sleep was ruined when lorries could pound through the capital at any time of the night.

The committee duly decided that the ban should be lifted and that profits should flow freely. The decision was leaked to Labour's London spokesman Nick Raynesford. When he denounced the committee on television, protests flooded in. Stephen Norris, the fun-loving transport minister, was in a jam. He was keen to help his party's friends in the industry, but he knew that the ban was extremely popular.

In a brilliant compromise, he decided to keep the ban but prevent its effective enforcement. At the moment the law insists that lorries have to have a permit to go through London at night. The permit is displayed clearly on the lorries, back and front. This makes it easy for the London boroughs' London Control

Unit to monitor lorries and prosecute those without permits (2,003 lorry firms were prosecuted last year).

Norris now says the lorries won't need permits, so the only way to check that they are entitled to be in London is to stop the lorries and interview the drivers. This can only be done by the police, who have already made it clear that they can't possibly deal with the new volume of hard and complicated night work. Thus Norris can pretend the ban still stands, while the haulage firms send their lorries thundering through the London streets at night without the slightest fear that they will be caught or punished.

FEREDAY'S LORE

IF ANYONE is ever brought to a court to stand trial for the 270 murders in the 1988 plane-bombing at Lockerbie, a crucial witness will be Allen Fereday OBE of the Royal Armament Research and Development Establishment (RARDE).

Buckets of praise have been poured on Fereday's work on the bombed airliner. He has been lauded to the skies by the Dumfries and Galloway police, the *Sunday Times* and even by government ministers.

If Fereday ever does appear in court, however, the defence may refer to the amazing case of John Berry who was convicted in 1981 of selling explosives in the Middle East. He claimed that the electric timers he was selling were for civilian purposes, chiefly for airport runway lights.

The prosecution case against him depended crucially on the evidence of Mr Fereday, who told the court: "The timing device was specifically designed and constructed for a terrorist purpose, that is to say, to be attached to an explosive device... I came to the conclusion that it could only be designed and manufactured for a terrorist operation."

The judge was so enchanted with this expert evidence that he had it transcribed and read it out to the jury. He described Fereday as "the principal and most vital witness for the prosecution".

Berry was convicted in May 1983 and sent down for eight years. His conviction was quashed on appeal 10 months later, but the prosecution appealed to the House of Lords. Before the Lords gave their judgement, Berry jumped bail and fled to Spain where he stayed for five years until, at huge public expense, he was extradited back to Britain. The case finally came to the court of appeal last year, 12 years after Berry was first arrested.

There at last, in front of the lord chief justice, it was established that what Fereday had told the 1983 trial was completely wrong. As Lord Taylor said in his judgment: "Each of the expert witnesses we heard disagreed with the extremely dogmatic conclusion expressed by Mr Fereday in his evidence at the trial. The effect of their evidence was that the timer is indeed a timer and nothing more."

Fereday's "no doubt honestly held conclusions", said Lord Taylor, were "open to doubt at the very least". The jury's verdict was set aside. The judges found themselves apologising to a man who had been wrongly imprisoned and had lived under the shadow of a conviction for 10 years, a conviction secured almost entirely by false forensics from the Lockerbie genius, Fereday of RARDE.

The Price of Orange

TIM SMITH : MP

PRICE WATERHOUSE, former auditors of BCCI, are doing a great deal of work for the Northern Ireland office.

The firm was chosen to do the pilot market testing for typing services and for messengers, and to carry out a review of financial systems in the estates division. It is also doing an efficiency scrutiny and evaluation of "Relate NI", and an option appraisal to identify the best way forward for value for money for audit work.

It is also carrying out value for money studies at selected hospital sites, and is helping the DHSS to develop a strategic approach to personnel management. Not only that, but the firm is preparing and monitoring a monthly financial position of a client company of the NI office's industrial development board and carrying out a financial appraisal of Mivan Windows. It is also preparing a strategic plan for a local enterprise agency and a business review of Extern.

Phew! What a lot of work and what a lot of money for Price Waterhouse — though the government won't say how much! And how familiar their accountants will be to the new parliamentary under secretary at the Northern Ireland office, former Tory party treasurer Tim Smith. For many years he was a paid parliamentary consultant to... Price Waterhouse.

Naturally, on taking up his appointment, Mr Smith severed all connections with the firm.

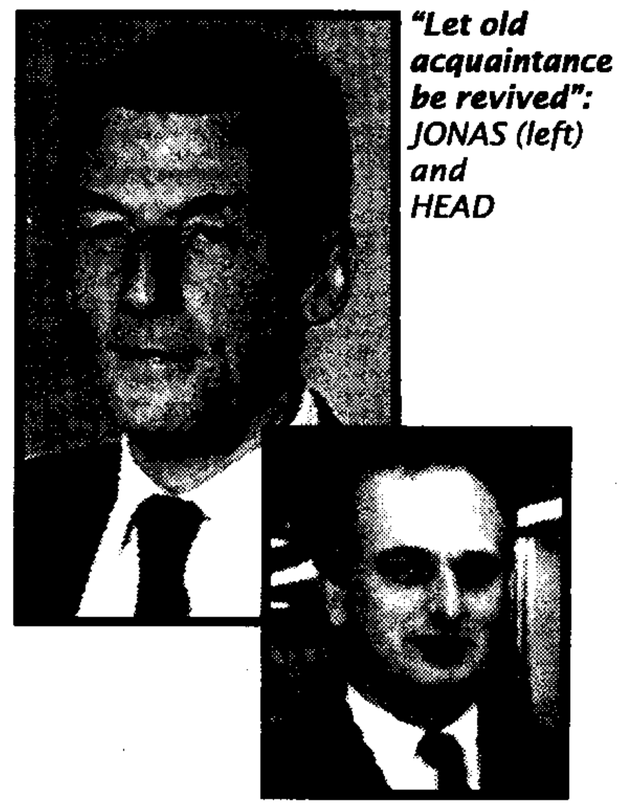
Two to Quango

■ MORE about the appointment of Philip Head, former chief executive of the disgraced Welsh Development Agency (see *Eye* 839) to a top job at a new quango, the Further Education Funding Council.

In his new job, Mr Head will be able to renew an acquaintance with an old business college, Christopher Jonas, partner in the big London valuers and surveyors, Drivers Jonas, and president of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

The Welsh Development Agency confirmed to the *Eye* that for at least three years when Mr Head was head of property services there, Drivers Jonas was its valuer. Drivers Jonas also did "minor consultative work" for the WDA over the garden festival at Ebbw Vale, and carried out a review for the Welsh office of property facilities of the WDA.

How was Mr Head appointed to his new job? The FEFC says he was recommended by an interview panel of three. Was Mr Jonas on the panel? The FEFC spokeswoman replied: "We are still not saying who was on the interview panel."



"Let old acquaintance be revived": JONAS (left) and HEAD

There is a difference, the *Eye* insisted, in not disclosing who was on the interview panel, and saying whether Mr Jonas was or was not on the panel. Back came the reply: "What I'm saying to you is that we are not disclosing it." There then followed this unusual comment: "Surely you will have your eyes on the libel laws. I know *Private Eye* is very good at contesting those".

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183

In the City

IT IS NOW more than a year since "stock market guru" Jim Slater began his weekly column in the now not *Independent* at all.

Dispensing general investment advice, increasingly occasional share tips and repeated "plugs" for his two books on how to play the market and not end up in court, how is "Changi Jim" doing?

Jim'll fix it — for Jim

The answer is distinctly *un*guru-like — despite picking some big winners.

Slater made it clear that the real criterion of stock picking success was beating the *FT* All Share index — "the best measure of general market performance" (15 July). This, he admitted (4 November), "is difficult to beat" and was a test miserably failed by most managers of unit trusts.

But surely such a target should be no problem for a man who insisted on the already far from *Independent* cloaking him with the "guru" mantle — despite Slater Walker's required rescue and the little matter of the extradition case which he won and the Companies Act prosecution which he lost?

After 13 months and 14 share tips, the much vaunted Slater magic has proved with one notable exception not significantly better than the All Share average — and that is taking the most flattering comparisons available and ignoring the not inconsiderable matter of dealing expenses.

Slater has picked 10 winners and four losers. The former is headed by cable TV programme maker Flextech, a longtime Slater favourite which he turned *Independent* readers on to at 154p on 10 October. The shares have since stormed upwards on the back of the deal with US cable giant TCI to 419p, a staggering rise of 172 percent, although the price is now heading down.

Another big winner has been Essex Furniture, the last share Slater picked at 150p on 16 December. The price is now 271p, a rise of 81 percent.

Two longer running winners have been medical group Amersham International, Slater's first tip at 695p on February 18 and now 51 percent higher at 1047p, and motor-cum-property group Ingham, picked on 15 April at 109p and now 164p, a rise of 50 percent.

Other successes have been retailers Motor World (picked on 1 April at 257p and now 341p, plus 33 percent) and electrical group Electron House (selected on 9 September at 118p and now 151p, plus 28 percent).

A success Slater showed less than guru-like foresight about was cut-price supermarketeer Shoprite. After writing it up at 140p on 17 June and again in July, Slater lost faith in November and recommended a sale when the shares were 157p to realise a profit of 12 percent. The shares are now 214p having been 243p, a profit missed of at least 53 percent.

The rest of the winners enclosure is made up of three Hong Kong shares — Slater, unlike President Clinton, is a big fan of Chinese companies doing business with the corrupt party bosses where wages, working standards and human rights are off the scale. Innovative International and S. Megga, both picked in June, are up 33 percent and 28 percent respectively helped by the 4 percent appreciation in the Hong Kong dollar. Yue Yuen Industrial, picked in December, is up 12.5 percent.

But then there are the losers, and there Slater too has scored big, rather contradicting the guru's oft-repeated mantra that cutting losses will guarantee that they stay "relatively small".

His second selection was computer software group Sage on 18 March at 567p. The shares hit 629p but then headed south as it emerged that Slater's view of the management and prospects ("excellent") was less than informed. The price grounded at 367p and has now recovered to 540p. Slater admitted he had sold out on 21 October when the price was 453p, a loss of 20 percent. But the loss at the bottom was 35 percent. Any *Indie* reader still in sits on a 5 percent loss.

The next "dog" Slater found was bio-tech counter Tepnel Diagnostics at 245p on 29 April. Once again Slater was wrong about the management ("very competent") and the prospects. By the time he signalled "sell" on 12 August the price was already 178p, down 27 percent. It is now 185p after being 153p, a level at which the loss would have been 38 percent.

Completing the hat-trick of big losers is Micro Focus, another computer software disaster. A "buy" at 2073p on 1 July ("a great growth share at a bargain price"), within six weeks Slater was hinting he had or would sell. The price was by then already 1815p. Slater cannot deal within six weeks either side of his writing a share up or down in his column. This was a condition belatedly forced on him after the *Eye* highlighted the loopholes allowed for the avid share trader by the embarrassingly eager duo of editor (but for how long?) Andreas Whittam Smith and now ex-business editor Christopher Huhne.

This means investors are left to read the market and sell — as Slater may have done despite his last published word being what a hot stock — before the guru tells them he is out. By the time Slater confirmed Micro Focus as a "sell" on 21 October the price had sunk to 1535p, a 26 percent fall. It is now 960p after 903p, a loss of 53%, helped by lower profits disclosed last week.

Completing the losing quartet is another Slater selection which signalled poorer-than-expected results last week, British Data Management. Picked at 223p on 6 May the shares went to 269p, they are now 212p showing a fall of 5 percent.

Overall the 14 Slater picks have shown an average gain of 30 percent giving a total profit of £2,502 on a total investment at £500 per share, the Slater recommended level, of £7,000.

If you held on and were unlucky enough to sell at the bottom with the four losers and, as the guru suggests, are still running your profits despite the prices being off the top, then the average gain would be 26 percent or £2,110 before expenses.

This performance — without Flextech the rise is on average just over 19 percent — from the author of *Investment Made Easy* compares with a rise in the FT All Share index of 20 percent in the same period. And that, dear *Indie* investor, not only assumes you got in or out at Jim's price (impossible) but ignores all dealing expenses (brokers' fees, buy-sell spread and stamp duty) which Slater himself estimates at around 5 percent. All of which suggests that, Flextech excepted, following the guru may have enriched very few *Indie* readers other than old "Changi Jim" himself, who as "an active investor" was always likely to be in before he wrote "buy" and out before he said "sell".

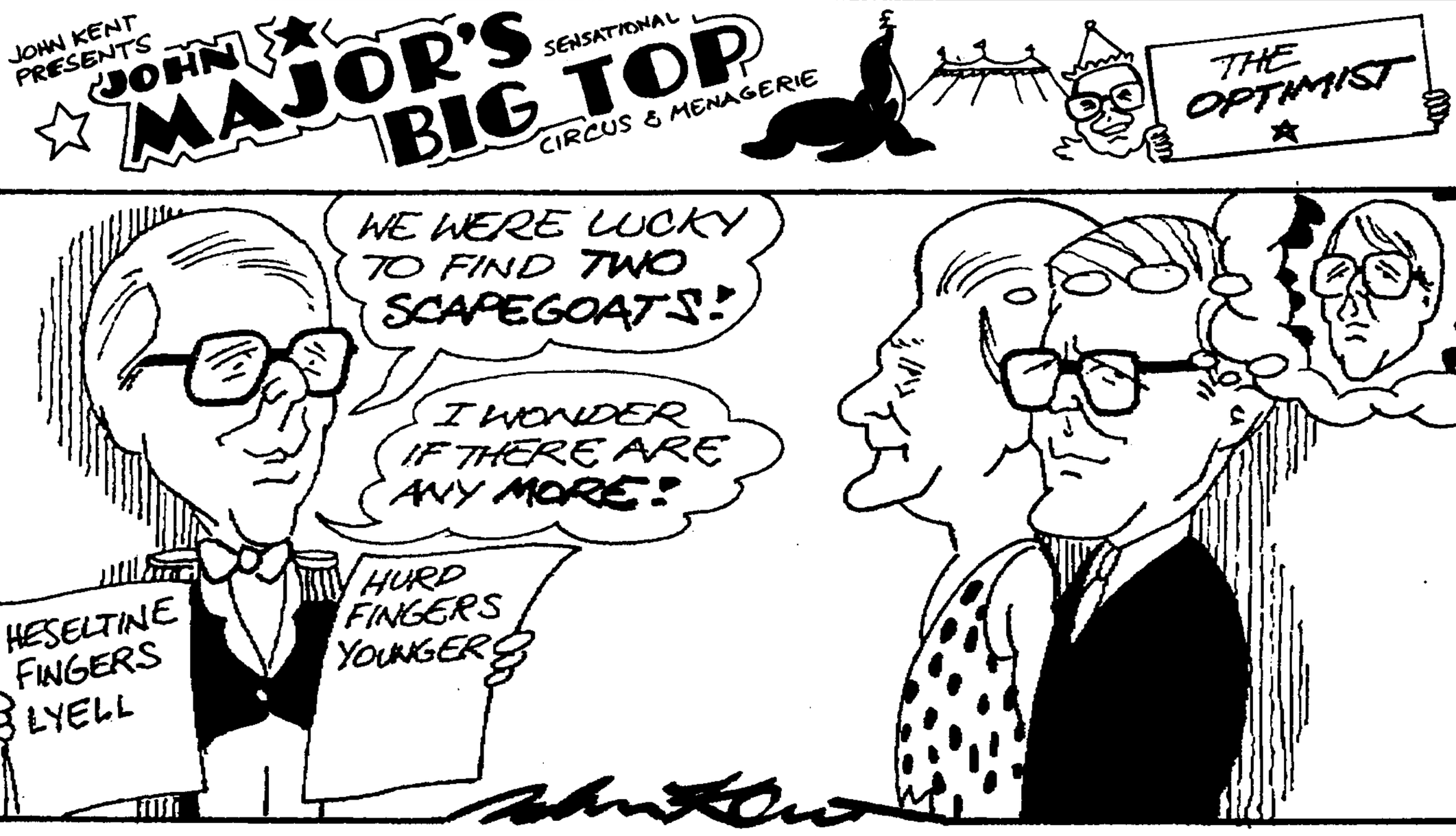
The latest words of wisdom from the guru — "We could be at the beginning of a big correction" (3 March) — suggest that now is not the time to be buying UK shares. Slater himself is moving ever more heavily into cash, despite his past claim that "cash is trash". The real trash has been certain Slater share picks and maybe the best advice he has now for *Indie* readers would be to follow his own example and sell. As Slater advised (15 July): "If you find that you are not beating the index you should consider switching to a unit trust."

If Jim is out this is no time to be in those shares he has not yet spelled out the "sell" signal. That way any *Indie* investor will not end up proving the theory of one of the guru's favourite books, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds* — ie that mostly Jim Slater, company law breaker, will not make real money for anyone other than himself.

BEHIND the scenes in the Brent Walker case matters may be moving for once in the Serious Farce Office's favour. It seems that a deal could be in the works for at least one of the defendants leaving the other two to consider their positions.

Meanwhile there is still no trace of Goldcrest finance director Donald Anderson, who disappeared shortly after the SFO sought to question him regarding a sum not unadjacent to £7.5 million which went through the Brent Walker subsidiary's books. Anderson's continued absence has been no help to former Goldcrest managing director John Quested, who has been only too eager to make his position clear.

Meanwhile much will depend at trial on the preparedness of various foreign bankers, particularly in Libya, to see it as their duty to turn up and explain what happened to the Goldcrest £7.5 million and another £5 million which did not go where it was supposed to have gone. The SFO has to hope they will come through and that there are no breaks in the money chain. ***'Slicker'***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Send your advertisements with your name, address, telephone number and cheque or postal order (payable to **PRESSDRAM LTD** - no cash please) to PRIVATE EYE SMALLS, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG. Also use this address to reply to box numbers. ACCESS, VISA or SWITCH cardholders may dictate advertisements on 071 734 6887 (24hrs) or Fax details on 071 437 0705. Submit advertisements to arrive at least 10 days before issue date. We regret there may be a delay before publication of EYE LOVE advertisements due to demand.

Send your advertisements to reach us by Tuesday 15th March for inclusion in the next issue.

FOR DISPLAY ADVERTISING: 071 437 4017

Quote of the week:

"Next time you rejoice at the elevation of some woman to high public office as an indication of progress remember that behind every successful woman there's another woman — cleaning her floors."
Máire Nic Suibhne in The Independent

DON'T TELL ANYONE — Bernard is 50 tomorrow! Happy Birthday.

THE DAKIN ROBOT, and its controllers. All guilty then, all guilty now. CT.

SPEECHWRITING by Mitch Murray. See "Eye Help".

"ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS!" t-shirts, only £5.99 inc p&p, payable to MJL. State L/XL. 2 Esh Terrace, Langley Park, Durham DH7 9XH.

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WIN A FREE TRANSVESTITE styling and photographic session at the premiere specialist London studio with this advertisement. Every 10th person will also receive a free 10x8 portrait or a 10% discount on any cosmetics purchased. Call bookings hotline GIRLS LIKE US 071-359 2289.

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MEGA WIND UP!! Birthdays etc, turn your friends into outrageous front page news — Daily Stun/telegram style!! Mega impact/souvenir. Front Page News Co 061-456 2028

EUREKA! EROTICA!! Finaly, erotic art at affordable prices. See ad on page 35 for details of our incredibly saucy little book!

IF THE THOUGHT FITS... STICKIT! See next PE.

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FLYING DUCKS, Cops 'n' robbers, doctors & nurses, dinosaurs... SAE for wall-plaque catalogue: INTO DESIGN, 28 Eastern Place, Brighton. (0273-606240) Access/Visa.

MR SPOCK LOOKALIKES worry no more! The three dimensional chess-set has arrived. Supplied with complete set of rules for £34.99 from Glendale, Pixmore House, Pixmore Avenue, Letchworth, Herts SG6 1JG. Phone 0462 484108.

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A "TITLE" for a tenner? Oh yes. Details from SURVIVAL (P), Gayfield, Arbroath, Scotland DD11 1QJ.

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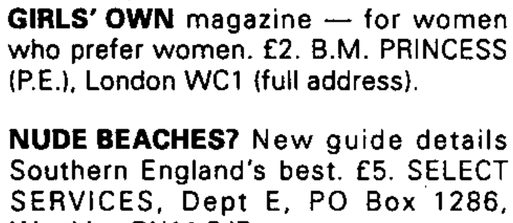

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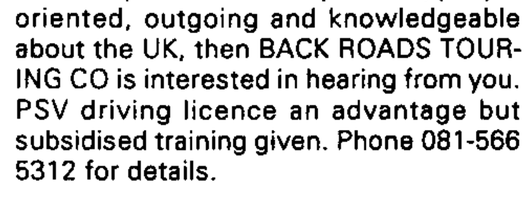

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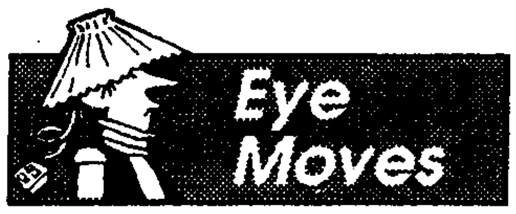

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Things snowballed and, less than a year later, membership of John Williams's joke club has risen so quickly that it could overtake that of the Caravan Club by the end of the century.

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Sunday Telegraph

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BALD, 48, VERY TALL, smoker. If you're female and still reading on I'm also well-travelled with wide interests, divorced, working in Orkney and waiting to hear from you. Box 1541.

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TO THE MANY "tall, successful, professional men," 50-60+, who often appear in these columns, I am that elegant willowy, lovely, leggy blonde you have been seeking. Box 3841.

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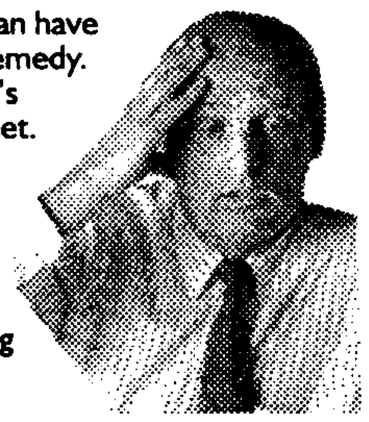

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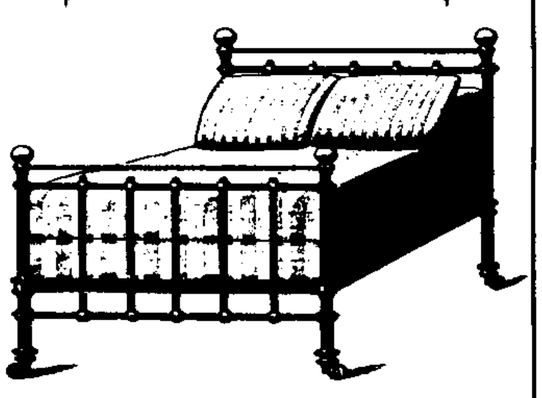

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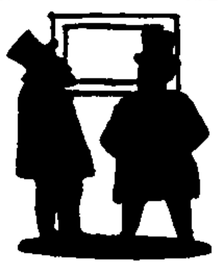

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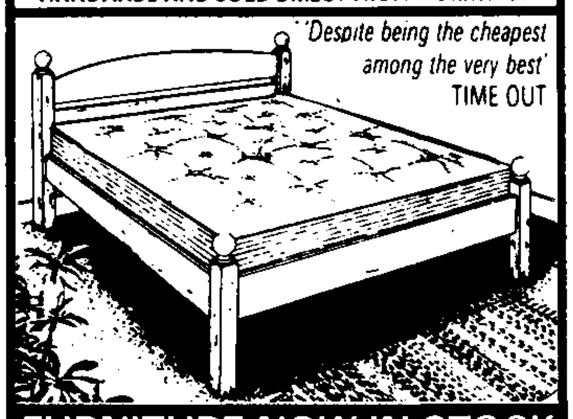

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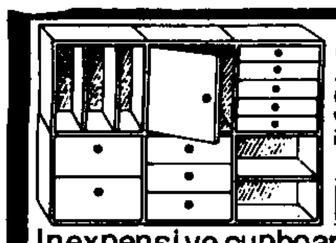

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